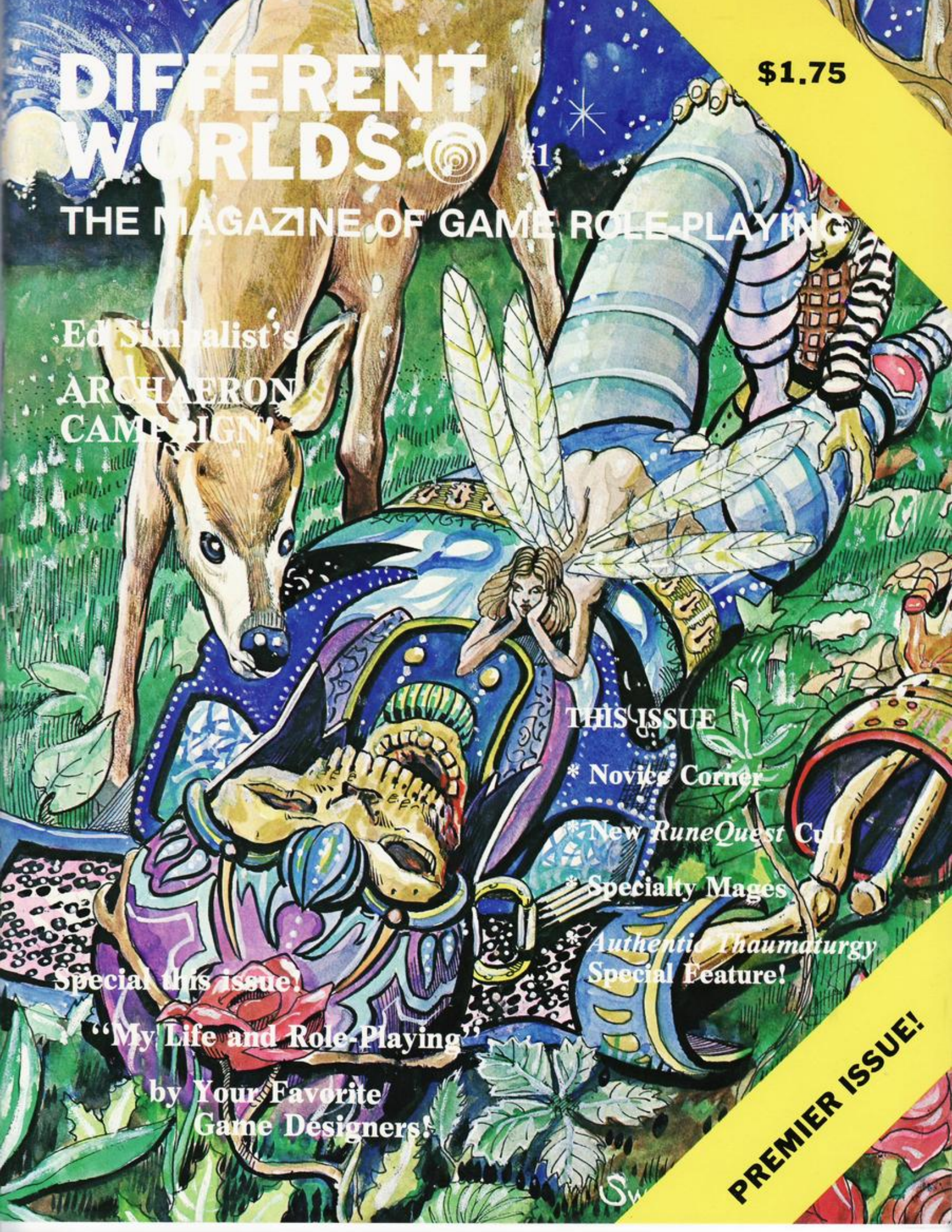
DIFFERENT WORLDS
#1
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DIFFERENT WORLDS

PREMIER ISSUE!

THE MAGAZINE OF GAME ROLE-PLAYING

EDITORIAL

Different Worlds. . .said one prominent game designer, "conjures up images of fantastic things from strange planets in space to demoniac hells." It took a while for us to come up with the title for this magazine. Our original title was *DM* but *DM* didn't seem to properly convey the scope of the magazine. We wanted a magazine to cover all aspects of game role-playing, from *Dungeons and Dragons* to *Bunnies and Burrows*, from *Traveller* to *En Garde*! Even SPI's upcoming *Commando*. We needed a better title.

Steve Perrin and I sat down one day to come up with a more appropriate title. Steve said one of his most favorite title was the one Margaret Gemignani used in *Alarums & Excursions* for her contributions, *Many Worlds*. Not bad I thought, *Many Worlds, Various Worlds . . .DIFFERENT WORLDS!* That was it. It said it all.

Game role-playing has come a long way since the publication of *Dungeons and Dragons* but it's still evolving. It is presently in a state of turmoil with the fantasy gamers not knowing which way to turn and the science fiction and other types of RPGs are without any organized groups around making it difficult for the newcomers to either find existing worlds to campaign in or to find players for their worlds. One of the many purposes of *Different Worlds* is to get *all* the role-playing gamers together and to facilitate a means for the game designers and the GMs to communicate with them. We hope this will be a worthwhile and invaluable service to all concerned.

We wanted our first issue to be something very special. We asked all the prominent people in the hobby to write an article on what role-playing meant to them, how it affected their lives, where it's going. It resulted in thirteen of the most enlightening articles on role-playing. *My Life and Role-Playing* will be a project we will be proud of for a long time to come. If you don't see your favorite gamer in the article, don't fret, we're still trying to get them into the second issue. Many have already promised, including our own Steve Perrin.

Also in this issue, we wanted to establish and define categorically what exactly is a role-playing game. *Beginner's Brew* will be a regular feature designed to help novices enter the world of role-playing. This issue's column defines role-playing from a player's point of view. Steve Lortz's *Role-Playing* article defines it from a game designer's point of view.

We are sure you will enjoy this premier issue of *Different Worlds*. Future issues will contain informative and timely articles on all aspects of role-playing games. Nothing but the best!

Happy gaming,

Tadashi Ehara

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NEXT ISSUE

Beginner's Brew on designing your first adventure. . . *Specialty Mages Part II* . . . another *RuneQuest* cult. . . The World of *Arduin* by Dave Hargrave. . . more *My Life and Role-Playing*. . . Steve Lortz on *Dramatic Structure of RPGs*. . . and more of the great Fantasy and SF artwork!

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Novice Corner

BEGINNER'S BREW

"What is all this stuff?"

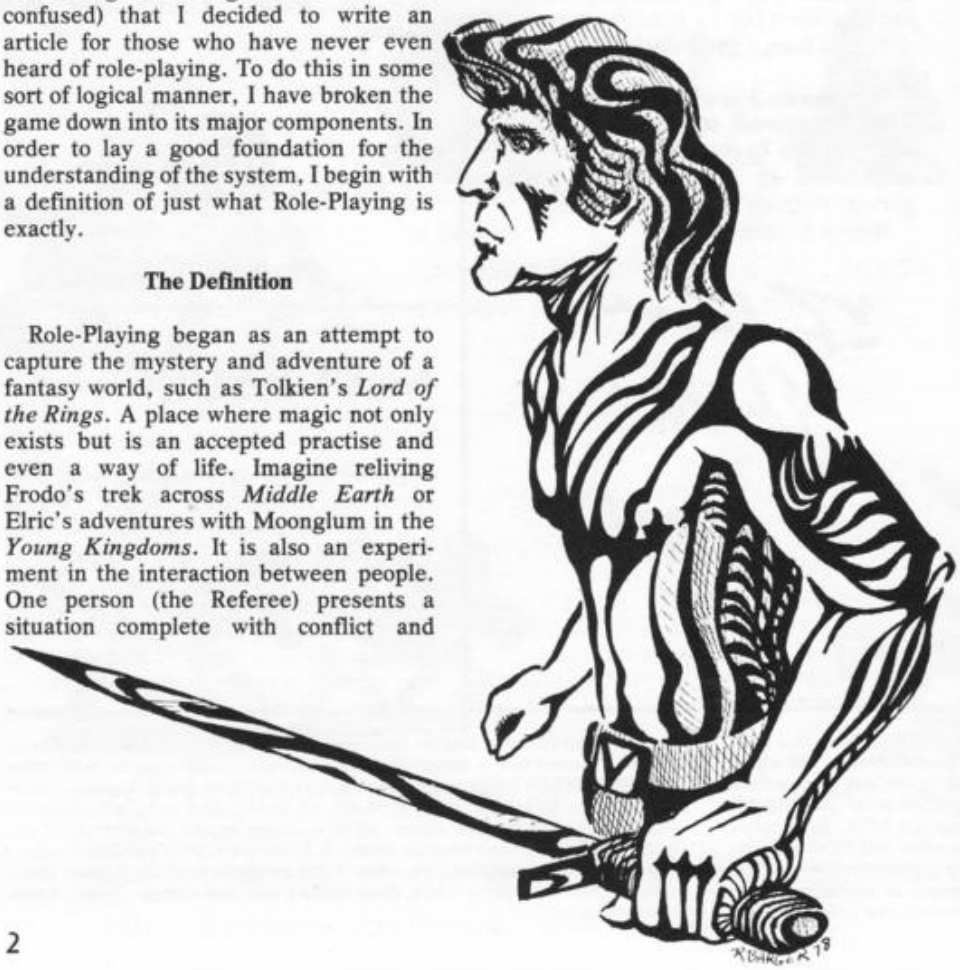
by Charlie Krank

Few indeed are the days when someone hasn't come into the store and asked, "*What is all this stuff?*" What they were looking at are the miniature figures and the rules systems of Fantasy and Science-Fiction Role-Playing Games. The first of these was a fantasy game which began about five or six years ago called *Dungeons and Dragons*. Now, there are several very good systems on the market.

Well, I got so tired of trying to explain what all of this means, (and only succeeding in making them even more confused) that I decided to write an article for those who have never even heard of role-playing. To do this in some sort of logical manner, I have broken the game down into its major components. In order to lay a good foundation for the understanding of the system, I begin with a definition of just what Role-Playing is exactly.

The Definition

Role-Playing began as an attempt to capture the mystery and adventure of a fantasy world, such as Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. A place where magic not only exists but is an accepted practise and even a way of life. Imagine reliving Frodo's trek across *Middle Earth* or Elric's adventures with Moonglum in the *Young Kingdoms*. It is also an experiment in the interaction between people. One person (the Referee) presents a situation complete with conflict and reward, and the others (the Players) try to combine their talents to overcome the challenge and gain that reward. The conflicts usually tend to be monsters or bad guys, but can also be things like riddles, traps or mazes. The rewards most often are a form of treasure (gems, gold or magical items), but can also be of a more abstract nature such as solving that riddle, figuring out the trap or making it through the maze. If the Players survive the adventure, they have some method for the advancement of their characters, a form of growth process. As the characters advance, they experience an increase in their fighting skills usually accompanied by an increase in the amount of money found on adventures. Players will use this money to replace, improve or augment their equipment. In a complex world, they may also be required to buy food and lodging.



Role-Playing is not a competitive type of game like chess or the standard wargames, but is rather a co-operative effort on the part of the Players to defeat the Referee's monsters. Also, there is no true "win" in the game. Each adventure in the game builds on the one before, almost as if each adventure was a chapter in a book. If the player's character survives, he will participate in the next adventure with a more powerful character If not, he must start over with a new character.

At this point, it may be helpful to look at just what the Referee and Players do in the game and how they go about resolving the conflicts.

The Referee

In any Role-Playing system, one person has the job of the Referee, and serves several purposes. Firstly, it is his responsibility to create the world in which all of the action in the game will take place. The complexity of this world can vary greatly. It can be as simple as a couple of rooms below a castle or as complex as a whole planet, complete with history, continents and a multitude of ongoing adventures. It all depends on the Referee's ambition and the amount of time available to work on it. One very popular time-saving device is to borrow a framework and history from some existing mythos. Of course one of the most popular is J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Other popular works

include Howard's *Conan*, Moorcock's *Elric*, Le Guin's *Earthsea* trilogy and Leiber's *Lankhmar*, CHAOSium has its own fantastic world of *Glorantha*.

Once the Referee has determined this structure, he then populates the different areas, be they the dungeon rooms that he's drawn out on paper or the wilderness areas located on his maps, with monsters. The term "monster" is used here, and in many rules systems, to indicate not only the animal type creatures in the world, but also the humans and human type people. This would include, for example, the friendly Elven Magic User who, for a price, will show the adventurers out of the area that they have gotten lost in.Certain common-sense types of guidelines should influence the Referee's placement of monsters. Large dragons, for instance, would need an immense room if they were not to feel cramped (remember that they do have to stretch their wings at times). Also certain monsters just naturally do not get along well together. Just a little time spent considering these factors will add incredibly to the believeability of play.

The next task of the Referee is to place the treasure in his adventure. Usually, when a party runs into a room, almost get themselves killed, but do succeed in dispatching the monster, they expect to find a good deal of treasure. I, however, find it more stimulating when the amount of booty is just enough to pay off expenses until the next adventure and possibly replace or improve my weapons and armor. This type of campaign style serves several purposes: first, it provides continued motivation to adventure, second, it vastly increases the value of plate mail and finely made weapons and, finally, it helps prevent the players from acquiring an arsenal of super-powered goodies and aid with which they breeze through hordes of baddies without the slightest danger to themselves. The final decision will be up to you, but keep in mind that part of the attraction of a game such as this is the struggle to survive and the uncertainty involved in accomplishing that survival.

A third purpose of the Referee is to run all of those monsters which were so thoughtfully scattered about. This will be the closest you get to actually playing in your world. The more life that you can give to those beasties, the more enjoyable will be your game to the players. There will be many times that you will develop a kind of attachment to one of your human or inhuman monsters, but one cold, hard fact that every Referee must face is that all your creatures will eventually die (that doesn't mean that they won't take an adventurer or two down with them, though). I'm not saying that you should go out and purposely kill off the characters, for if the Players feel that that is your whole motivation then they may stop playing in your world (and then all of your work is down the tubes). Instead, a good Referee will play the monsters so as to give the greatest challenge to the Players. This will keep the game lively and interesting, and a good deal of fun for all parties involved.

A final purpose of the Referee is to answer the multitude of questions that the Players will ask. Some will be relatively easy, such as, "What are the chances of my character with a dexterity of 17 making a 10 foot jump onto the back of that orc?" Then will be the times when they ask, "Does a Protection from Evil spell apply to an animal who is instinctively protecting his territory from intruders. He may not necessarily be considered evil unless he was sent here purposely to harm us but. . . " Simpler questions on ability can usually be resolved by a die roll. The more complex questions will require some judgement on your part. If you really cannot decide, the Players always have suggestions, not all of which can be mentioned in public. You may want to listen to them, but the final decision will have to be yours. Remember also that what is good for the Players is good for the monsters, and vice versa. As you become more experienced, you will find that your game will attain an individuality and style all its own and that the players will be eager to find out if they can master its murky depths.

The Players

Before the game begins, each beginning Player will generate one or more (depending on the Referee) characters who will participate in the adventure. Players who already have characters will just use the ones they have. Each rules system has its own prescribed method for this determination of characters, but they all have certain points in common. The first step will be to generate certain characteristics which will usually include such attributes as Strength, Intelligence, Power, Constitution, Dexterity and Charisma. These scores will provide both an indication of how your character will act in certain situations, and help determine the profession that he should follow. If your character has very good strength, for example, he will be a better fighter and will perform better in strength-related activities such as opening locked doors than someone whose abilities lie more in intelligence. The very intelligent character, on the other hand, will have more of a mastery of languages and spells. Both could accomplish the same end, but use different methods.

The next determination will be the asessment of the amount of damage that your character can take before he is killed. Many systems have this linked very closely with the constitution of the character. During the game, the Player will have to keep a running total of his character's hit points. If these are exceeded, then the character is dead. It becomes, therefore, very important ot protect your character as well as possible. One of the primary ways of doing this is to buy armor. First though, you must have some amount of money.

The money with which you start the game can be determined in several ways. Some systems use tables showing different social classes and the probabilities for each, with the classes each having amounts of money available. Others use a simple die roll. However it is done, an amount of money will be allotted. With this, you must purchase weapons, armor (as mentioned above) and supplies. The choice of weapon will be basically up to you. Some systems have restrictions based on character classes (occupations), social ranks or abilities. The different weapons will cost varying amounts of money and will do different amounts of damage.It is often a wise practise to carry more than one if possible, in case you happen to lose or break one. Armor may also have certain restrictions similar to weapons, but will be more influenced by your intended activities and pocket book. While plate mail will give you about the best protection around, it generally costs a great deal and is not entirely suited for swimmers. Conversely, the lighter forms of armor, leather and chain, allow a good deal more movement and silence, but don't afford as much protection.

Another use for money will be the purchase of accessory equipment. Unless you can see in the dark, as some races can, then torches are a good buy. Of course you will need to buy provisions and some sort of carrying device. Other things such as rope, stakes and mallet, flasks of oil and the like can also be very useful, but their purchase will have to depend on your monetary situation. Also remember that money is good for the buying of services, repair of armor and weapons, bribing of officials and so forth. If things are really tight, you could borrow from the town money-lender (at outrageous prices, of course), but remember that you should find at least a little treasure during the course of an adventure, so don't despair. Also, if your character survives the adventure, his fighting skills will develop. When he becomes good enough, he can begin to hire himself out. The number of ways in which money can be made (or acquired) are only limited by your imagination.

Throughout all of this, you will find that your character will become more and more a part of you.He will begin to develop a personality of his own, and increasingly you will find that you play the character as an individual. This is the

essence of Role-Playing, and one of the prime reasons why it has caught on in the past few years. You are able to live out your fantasies through your character and his death could result in a real sense of loss.

The Equipment

The most important part of any Role-Playing game is the rules system. At this moment, there are quite a few systems on the market. Here I will present only a few. In later issues, we will try to provide a more complete listing.

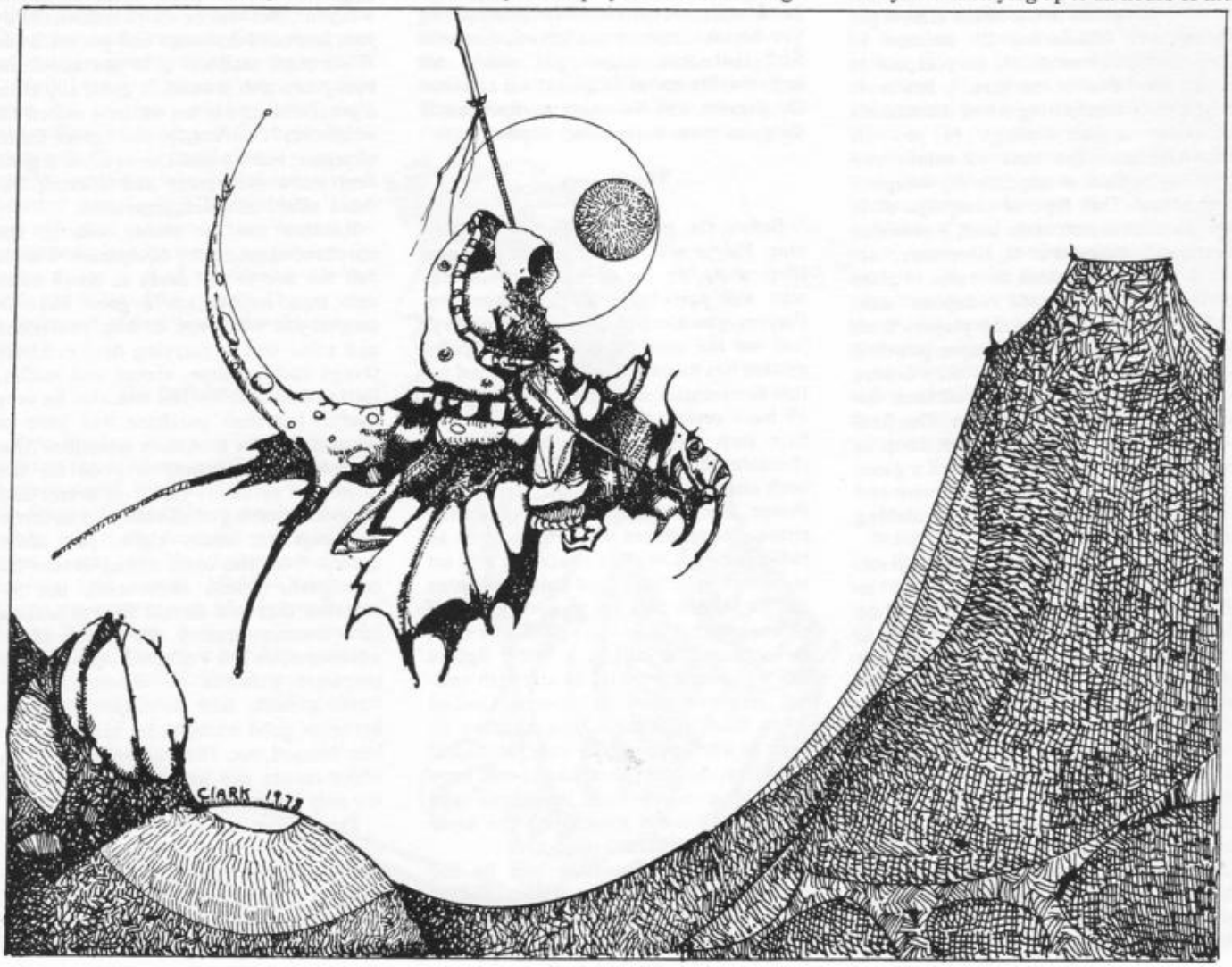
If you are more interested in Fantasy Role-Playing, you might go to your store and look over these systems. From Tactical Studies Rules (TSR) comes the aforementioned *Dungeons and Dragons* and *Empire of the Petal Throne*. A group in Arizona called Flying Buffalo produces one of the more light-hearted systems called *Tunnels and Trolls*, and for those of you interested in a good deal of historical accuracy concerning the Medieval Ages, look at *Chivalry and Sorcery* from Fantasy Games Unlimited (FGU). FGU also makes a game based on the very popular novel *Watership Down*, a book about a rabbit society, named *Bunnies and Burrows*. Game Designers' Workshop has a game which also closely simulates the mood in the age of honor and chivalry called *En Garde*, Legacy Press manufactures *Legacy*, and CHAOSium recently brought forth *Runequest!*

For those of you more into the Science-Fiction type of adventure consider *Metamorphosis Alpha*, a trip through a lost spaceship, by TSR. If you would rather run your own ship, give *Starships and Spacemen* by FGU a try, or even their *Flash Gordon* game. GDW makes another spaceship running game called *Traveller*, and TYR Gamemakers makes an all-encompassing set of spaceship rules called *Spacequest*. If you always wanted to be a superman, try *Superhero 44* from Lou Zocchi. Finally, if your interests lie more in the Wild West framework, look at *Boot Hill* by TSR or *Wild West* from Lou Zocchi.

When looking for a system to use, talk with the people a the store. They may be able to help you decide which system would best suit you. Then, go home and read the rules through several times before playing, or, better yet, try and find somebody who plays the rules. High schools, colleges and universities are often good places to look.

Once you decide on a system, there are several ways to play. Some people like to play orally. The Referee describes the rooms, and the players tell him what they are doing. I prefer to use little 25mm lead figures available in many game stores. They help both the Players and the Referee visualize the action and greatly aid in determining the distances between the players and the monsters. When using these miniatures, the Referee will have to indicate the hallways and rooms of his scenarios. Any method is acceptable, be it toothpicks on a tabletop, chalk on a blackboard or grease pencil on plexiglass, as long as all Players understand the scale and the system.

Finally, there are several effects of becoming involved in Role-Playing. When I first began, I was buying any and everything that I could get my grubby little hands on (my father never could understand how you could spend so much money on just one game). As a result, I am now the proud owner of hundreds of miniature figures, and enough rules systems to start a small store. You will find yourself staying up to all hours of the



night devising ways to subtly eliminate the Players. All your free time will disappear, and you become very, very poor. Your games will last through one night and on into the next when you drop from exhaustion, only to awake and begin again. You can always tell a Referee by the distinctly "undead" look about him. It's great!

The Final Note

If you have any questions or comments concerning a rule system or interpretation of rules, please send them in to *Different Worlds*, care of *Beginner's Brew*. We'll be happy to answer them as soon as we can.

* * *

Many of the articles in this and future issues of *Different Worlds* have and will have various abbreviations that are hobby standards. The following is a list of the more common ones.

D4	a four-sided die
D6	a six-sided die
D8	an eight-sided die
D10	a ten-sided die (a twenty-die numbered one to ten twice)
D12	a twelve-sided die
D20	a twenty-sided die
D100	a roll of two D10s to produce random numbers from one to one hundred
D3	a roll of a D6 with results of 1-2=1, 3-4=2, and 5-6=3
3D6	a sum resulting from a roll of three D6s
10xD6	ten times a roll of D6
100x10D10	one hundred times a roll of 10D10
FRP	fantasy role-playing game
RPG	role-playing game
GM	gamemaster
DM	dungeon master
APA	Amateur Press Association

* * *

The following is a list of companies and the role-playing games that are available from them. Conventional abbreviations are in parenthesis. Please inform us if there are any discrepancies or omissions.

Archive Miniatures
1111 S Railroad Ave
San Mateo, CA 94402

Star Rovers (in preparation)

Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc (FGU)
PO Box 182
Roslyn, NY 11576

Chivalry and Sorcery (*C&S*)
Bunnies and Burrows
Flash Gordon & the Warriors of Mongo
Starships and Spacemen

Gamescience
Lou Zocchi & Associates
7604 Newton Dr
Biloxi, MS 39532

Knights of the Round Table
Space Patrol
Superhero 2044

TSR Hobbies, Inc (TSR)
PO Box 756
Lk Geneva, WI 53147

Dungeons and Dragons [*D&D*]
Gamma World
Empire of the Petal Throne [*EPT*]
Metamorphosis Alpha [*MA*]
Star Probe
Star Empires

Tyr Gamemakers Ltd
PO Box 414
Arlington, VA 22210

Space Quest
Bushido

Metagaming
PO Box 15346
Austin, TX 78761

Monsters! Monsters! [*M!M!*]

The CHAOSium
PO Box 6302
Albany, CA 94706

RuneQuest (*RQ*)

Flying Buffalo, Inc
PO Box 1467
Scottsdale, AZ 85252

Tunnels and Trolls [*T&T*]
Starfaring

Game Designers Workshop (GDW)
203 North St
Normal, IL 61761

En Garde!
Traveller

Legacy Press
217 Harmon Rd
Camden, MI 49232

Legacy

James E. Mathis
2428 Ellsworth (#102)
Berkeley, CA 94704

Arduin Grimoire
Welcome to Skull Tower
Runes of Death

Heritage Models, Inc
9840 Monroe Dr (Bldg 106)
Dallas, TX 75220

Star Trek

* * *

The following is a list of magazines that may be of interest to role-playing gamers. Their usual abbreviations are in parenthesis.

ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS (A&E)
Lee Gold
3965 Alla Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90066

THE DRAGON (TD)
TSR Periodicals, Inc.
P.O. Box 110
Lk Geneva, WI 53147

THE SPACE GAMER (TSG)
Metagaming
P.O. Box 15346
Austin, TX 78761

SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
Flying Buffalo, Inc.
P.O. Box 1467
Scottsdale, AZ 85252

THE JUDGES GUILD JOURNAL (JGJ)
and THE DUNGEONEER
Judges Guild
1165 N. Univ.
Decatur, IL 62526

THE LORDS OF CHAOS (LOC)
Nicolai Shapero
8885 Earhart Ave.
Westchester, CA 90045

THE WHITE DWARF (WD)
Games Workshop
One Dalling Rd.
Hammersmith, London W6 0JD
England

THE WILD HUNT (TWH)
Mark Swanson
71 Beacon St.
Arlington, MA 02174

WARGAMING
Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc.
P.O. Box 182
Roslyn, NY 11576

Did we leave any others out? If we did, we would appreciate you letting us know.

D&D Variant

SPECIALTY MAGES

PART 1

by Mike Gunderloy

Mike Gunderloy is a name on the rise in FRP world. His D&D campaign is known for high adventure, fierce monsters, many and diverse magics, and exotic character classes and characters. Herein he gives us some of the background of his campaign world of Alanor and begins a three-part article on the Specialty Mages. Descriptions of the rest of the Specialty Mages will appear in future issues of Different Worlds.

Alanor is an old world, with a written history stretching back over a period of twenty thousand years and legends going even deeper into the past. The history of Alanor has been cyclic, with civilization rising several times only to be pounded back into the dust. After the last cycle was over, however, a new and potent force entered the world—Magic.

At first, the new force was unknown and unknowable, so no man could grasp its substance in all of its many guises. A number of types of Specialists appeared, seeking to tame one facet only of the new force. These were the Mages of Earth and Sea, of Light and Dark, of Fire and Ice, of Lightning and Crystal, and of Acid and Wind. These mages concentrated all of their energies on one elemental field, seeking to unlock its secrets.

But while the Specialists proliferated, other forces were also at work in Alanor. There were those who were determined to understand all of the secrets of Magic, to turn all of the elements to their own uses. In time they succeeded, becoming the first of th True Mages. Although not as versed in any one field as their specializing brethren, they were able to use all fields of the Art. Determining to wrest the secrets of all from those who knew, they lay in wait until their strength was judged sufficient, and then attacked the Specialists for the knowledge stored in their places of work. So begin the bloody Magic Wars, which eventually wiped out all of the Specialists.

So it was thought. However, a few specialists have begun to openly practice in the last few years, and it is apparent that they are only the advance forces of their sects. The Specialists were not crushed, only driven into hiding, and they are now coming forth once again, not to contest with the True Mages, but to coexist with them. An alliance has been formed between the True Mages and the Specialists, and the Golden Age of Magic is upon the world.

In Alanor, the True Mages actually function quite similarly to those described in the original rules of D&D. Their spell use is basically Vancian, but upped by a factor of 1-5, depending on Intelligence. They are limited in the number and levels of spells they may learn by Intelligence in the usual manner.

Specialty Mages operate in basically the same way. However, since they are from the Eldest Days, when magic was new in the world and known to few, there are seveal changes. They had to strive and fight for their Magic, becoming mighty fighters as well as mages in the process. Thus, their spell use is less than that of True Mages, but their fighting ability is more.

Level	EP	1	2	3	4	5
1	0	1				
2	2,500	2				
3	5,000	3	1			
4	10,000	4	2			
5	20,000	5	3	1		
6	40,000	6	4	2		
7	80,000	7	5	3	1	
8	160,000	8	6	4	2	
9	320,000	9	7	5	3	1
up	+160,000	follow the pattern				

Special Characteristics

PRIME REQUISITE is Intelligence, but they must have a Strength of 9 or greater also.

SAVING THROWS are as mages, but in groups of 3 instead of 5. Saves are at + 2 in their own field, but at -2 vs. their antithesis.

WEAPON USE includes spears and swords, but no other weapons. MAGIC ITEM USE includes any item usable by mages or all calsses, and all potions except those which are only for Clerics.

ARMOR may not be used except for helmets, not even leather armor. Heavy robes (AC8) are acceptable.

BONUSES for extraordinary Strength and Dexterity.

FIGHT as fighters of two thirds their own level, rounded down.

HIT DICE are D6, one per level to 11th level, then +1½ hit points per level.

Definition of Terms

D = Duration
R = Range
HD = Hit Dice

THE MAGES OF EARTH

These are the first of all, whose mystic side was touched and awakened by the great Earth-Mother. She taught them to use the mystic forces and helped them to gain dominance over the earliest civilizations. They are benevolent towards man as she is

and feel close ties with Nature. Although the sect is ancient now, they are still active, and worship and help the Earth Mother in all of the guises she wears. Alignment is Lawful/Good.

Level 1 Spells:

Detect Magic, Read Magic: As D&D Magic User.
Detect Snares & Pits: As D&D Druid.
Know North: Works in any setting. D = 1 hour.
Soften Earth: Softens the ground in a 10' diameter circle, holding all of up to 6 HD in their place. R = 30', D = 1 minute.
Earth Darts: Creates deep brown darts, one per level of the mage, projected as from a light cross bow +2. They do 1D4 damage each, but only if the target is hit and fails to save.
Dust Screen: Kicks up a wall of dust the same size as a wall of ice. It does no damage to those breaching it, but there is a 5% chance that they will be blinded for 1D20 minutes. R = 120', D = 10 minutes.

Level 2 Spells:

Protection from Earth: Gives one person +1 save vs. Earth-based attacks (including petrify) and -1 pip per die of damage from such attacks. R = touch, D = 1 day.
Speak with Animals: As D&D Cleric.
Deepen Earth: As Soften Earth, but a 20' diameter effect which holds all up to 12HD.
Miniblast: A 5' radius blast of the Earth Principle (cold and dry) which does 4D8 damage plus ½D8 damage for every level the caster attains after learning this spell. R = 20'.
Wall of Earth: As Wall of Ice.

Level 3 Spells:

Dispel Magic, Wall of Stone: As D&D Magic User.
Plant Growth: As D&D Druid.
Rockstorm: As D&D Icestorm.
Blast: A 20' radius blast of the Earth Principle doing the caster's level in D8 damage to all within. R=30'.

Level 4 Spells:

Hallucinatory Terrain: As D&D Magic User.
Speak With Plants: As D&D Cleric.
Control Temperature, 10' r.: As Druid.
Earthhold: As Soften Earth, but a single target effect. It will hold any one being up to twice the caster's HD. R=60', D=10 minutes.
Cloud: A cloud of the Earth Principle (as Cloudkill) which does 5D6 per turn to all within.

Level 5 Spells:

Rock-Mud, Stone-Flesh, Passwall: As D&D Magic User.
Heal Stone: A spell which will *re-create* up to a 10' cube of stone which was previously carried away by human means. Will remove a door, block a passage, and so on. R=10', D= until dispelled.
Conjure: Earth Elemental.
Bury: Dumps 1000 cubic feet of dust wherever the caster desires. R=360'.
Mold Stone: Allows the mage to make up to 10 pounds times his level of stone plastic and moldable for 10 minutes times his level before it hardens again. R=touch.

Level 6 Spells

Disintegrate, Move Earth: As D&D Magic User.
Speak with Monsters, Conjure Animals: As D&D Cleric.
Quicksand: Creates an 80' square area of quicksand. All in the area will sink at 2' per turn. If they go under, they will die in 1D4+1 melee rounds. Movement through the quicksand is at 1/5 speed, and those moving will sink 3' per turn. Those still in the quicksand at the end of the spell are then stuck in the earth. R=100', D=1D4+1 turns.
Pillar of Earth: Causes a 10' diameter, 100' high pillar of rock to grow from the ground at 10' per minute. R=360', D=1 hour.
Lead Spray: A cone of boiling lead 60'x20'. Does the caster's level in D8 damage and leaves about 20 pounds of solidifying lead lying about. R=must start at caster's finger.
Rock to Sludge: As Rock to Mud, but sludge also does 1/5 the caster's level in D6 damage to all within per round.
Immunity: One target becomes completely immune to all Eart-based attacks. R=touch, D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.

Level 7 Spells:

Reverse Gravity: As D&D Magic User.
Earthquake: As D&D Cleric.
Animate Rock: As D&D Druid, but the Rock always obeys.
Spell of Burrowing to Safety: The caster may burrow up to 600 yards through solid rock. Takes 2 melee rounds.
Delayed Blast: A Blast, but up to 10 minutes delay.

Level 8 Spells:

Power-Word-Gravity: User is under the influence of 1G in whatever direction he wishes, regardless of the real or altered gravity in the area. D=10 minutes.
Growth/minerals: Causes a rock or bunch of rocks to expand to any size up to 60'x60'x60'. Has no effect on larger rocks or pieces of larger rocks. R=240', d=1 hour.
Disintegrate Stone: As Disintegrate, but affects mineral matter only.
Forlorn Encystment: Causes one target to save or sink one mile into the earth. Victim needs a full wish or better to escape. The incantation can be reversed to recover victims. Takes 2 rounds to cast. R=120', D= forever.
Doomkill: A 30' radius explosion which blows everything to bits. Save for Level 1-4 is 17, level 5-7 is 15, level 8+ is 13. Roll 2D6: 2=within 30' of caster, 3-6=2D4x10' short, 7-9=on target, 10-12=2D4x10' long. R=240'.

Level 9 Spells:

Shrink Minerals: Shrinks any rock or group of rocks (up to a 60' cube and not part of a larger rock) down to 1/100 size. R=120', D=1 hour.
Tilt Gravity: The user may tilt gravity to any angle he wishes in a

Tilt Gravity: The use may tilt gravity to any angle he wishes in a 180' cube. Once the angle is set, it may not be altered. R=360', D=1 hour.
Manpit: Opens up a 3' diameter, 300' deep pit beneath one person (Save vs. Agility or fall in). If anyone hits the bottom of the pit, he takes the caster's level in D8 damage (no save) and then the pit collapses about him. R=240', d=1 hour or until detonated.
Polymorph rocks: Allows the mage to change the type of 10 pounds times his level of rock (example: quartz to marble) permanently. Precious stones produced will be highly imperfect.

Level 10 Spells:

Wish, Permanent Spell: As D&D Magic User.
Hug of the Earth Mother: Two giant hands come up from the Earth and smash the target. No save, does 20D20 damage. R=120'. Usable once a week.
Assimilate: The mage becomes a part of the earth (he and his equipment melt into it) and he cannot then be harmed except by spells such as Rock to Mud. D=as long as desired.
Control Gravity: The user may continuously vary the angle and

intensity (0-5G) of gravity within a 360' cube. R=480', D=1 hour.

The Mages of Water

When the Sea-Father first heard of the Earthen Ones, he was intensely jealous. He created and educated his own set of followers as quickly as he could, and tried to make up for lost time. This attitude is still present in the enchanters of the sea, and they tend to act quickly and without much planning. However, even though they dislike the Earth Mages, they still dislike wanton killing, and they prefer to live and let live. Alignment is Chaotic/good.

Level 1 Spells:

Read Magic, Detect Magic: As D&D Magic User.
Purify Water: As D&D Druid.
Extinguish Small Fire: Puts out one fire up to 10'x10'. R=120'.
Dissolve: A small field of the Sea Essence (cold and wet) doing 1D4 points of damage to one creature. No save. R=60'.
Sea Darts: Produces light blue darts, one per level of caster, which are projected as from a light crosbow +2. They do 1D4 points of damage each, but only if they hit and the target fails to save.

Level 2 Spells:

Create Water: As D&D Cleric.
Protection from Water: Gives one target +1 save vs. water-based attacks and -1 pip per die of damage vs. such attacks. R=touch, D=1 day.
Speak with Sea Creatures: As Speak with Animals.
Pond: Produces a 15' diameter, 1' deep pool of water. R=120', D=permanent.
Wall of Water: As Wall of Ice.
Minidrench: A 5' radius blast of the sea Essence which does 4D8 points of damage plus an additional ½D8 damage per level the caster has obtained after learning this spell. R=20'.

Level 3 Spells:

Dispell Magic, Water Breathing (triple effects): As D&D Magic User.
Charm Sea Creatures: As D&D Spell Charm Monster.
Drench: Produces a 20' radius blast of the Sea Essence which does the caster's level in D8 damage to all within. R=240'.
Drenchbolt: A 60'x5' line of the Sea Essence which does the caster's level in D8 damage to all it catches. R=120'.
Water Cure: Turns a bottle of water into a healing potion. Good only if taken within the hour. R=touch.

Level 4 Spells:

Speak with Animals, Neutralize Poison: As D&D Cleric.
Water Storm: As D&D Spell Icestorm.
Freedom: Alows one person to move in water as in air. R=30', D=1 hour.
Decompression: Allows one person to ascend from a long stay in the deeps without getting the bends. R=30'.
Mist: A cloud of the Sea Essence (as D&D Cloudkill) which does 5D6 per turn to all within.
Line: A 60' long, 5' diameter line of water blasts in whatever direction the mage points. No damage per se, but note that this much water weights about 73,5000 pounds. R=must start at caster's finger.

Level 5 Spells:

Lower Water, Part Water, Control Weather: As D&D Magic User.
Conjure: Water Elemental.
Rock to Water: As D&D Spell Rock to Mud.
Flesh to Water: As D&D Spell Flesh to Stone.
Drown: Dumps 1000 cubic feet of water wherever the caster desires. R=360'.

Level 6 Spells:

Immunity: Makes one person immune to all water-based attacks. R=touch, D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.
Water Walking: One person. R=30', D=1 hour.
Water Living: As Permanent Water Breathing plus Permanent Freedom spells, makes the recipient a true amphibian. R=30'.
Encrust: Encrusts one target with a 6'' thick layer of sea salt. Does the caster's level in D6 damage and requires a strength of 14+ to break out, otherwise die of asphyxiation. R=30'.

Level 7 Spells:

Sodden: a cloud of thick clinging mist completely surrounds one person, completely ruining all water-vulnerable objects, including scrolls, books, leather armor, and so on. No save. R=120'.
Animate Water: As D&D Duridical Animate Rock. Always obeys.
Delayed Drench: As Drench, but up to 10 minutes delay.
Control Water: Allows the caster to direct the motions of up to 100 pounds of water times his level, including forming it into statues and so on. R=10', D=1 hour.

Level 8 Spells:

Clone: As D&D Magic User.
Direct Water: Allows the mage to direct the currents and tides in a large body of water. Similar to D&D Spell Control Weather.
Move Water: Creates huge waves in a 1 mile square area, up to 10' high per level of caster. R=1 mile.
The Eating Water: A bolt of strange blue water, pencil-thin yet 60' long, which does the caster's level in D12 damage by eating and dissolving all that it hits. R=180'.

Level 9 Spells:

Stalker Drench: As Drenchbolt, but no maximum range, and will tirelessly follow its target at 480' per turn until it hits or is dispelled.
Eating Puddle: A puddle of strange water, 1' in diameter per level of the caster. It absorbs all who touch it up to 1½ times his own hits, and dries up when it has absorbed 6 times his (the caster's) hit points total. R=30'.
Wash: Removes all slimes, acids, mold, and so on up to 3 times the caster's own HD in a 30' cube.
Polymorph Self to Water: The mage becomes a creature of water, and is only harmed by things destructive to water.

Level 10 Spells:

Wish, Permanent Spell: As D&D Magic User.
Dissipation: A cloud of mist which automatically dispels any elemental, cloud, mist, fog, or magical wall which it touches. R=50', D=1 hour.
Magical Fog: Creates a 10' radius area of fog about the caster. within this area, his spell effects are doubled, while other magic is subject to an automatic dispel attempt at his level. D=2D6 turns.

DIFFERENT WORLDS Special Feature

My Life and Role-Playing

LEONARD H. KANTERMAN, M.D.

One of the purposes of this project is to find out what kind of person some of these people are. I never met Leonard. Read on if you wish to know more about the designer of Starships & Spacemen.

"Where No Man Has Gone Before"

Author's Preface: At Origins IV in Detroit, I was fortunate enough to take part in a seminar on Fantasy Role-playing games with some of the more notable designers in the field. I would like to take this opportunity, the premier issue of a new magazine on the subject, to convey some of the thoughts I expressed on that panel.

* * *

I was something of a latecomer to the field of fantasy/role-playing games, having cut my teeth on conventional board war-gaming. Indeed, I was already a published game designer before I'd even heard of *Dungeons and Dragons*. Like many other wargamers, I reacted with a healthy blend of interest and skepticism at the idea of a game that could be played without a board, units, or combat tables. (The association of *D&D* with medieval miniatures in fact dampened my enthusiasm, as I could not spare the expense that would be required.) However, my curiosity was piqued.

My first exposure to *D&D* was at a meeting of a New York wargame club I used to belong to that met in a dank, rat-infested cubbyhole on the Lower East Side. (What better atmosphere for *D&D*?) It was a disaster. The DM ran a group of 6 novices through a wilderness encounter, taking each of us separately in turn rather than as a group, thus incurring a wait of up to 2 hours before our characters were in play. To compound this error, he put our weak, vulnerable first-level characters up against such formidable foes as were-bears, manticores, and cockatrices. I was almost put off of role-playing completely, but I had learned from this brief, initial encounter, two of what I consider to be the four cardinal rules of role-playing. Firstly, an enjoyable game requires an experienced and imaginative gamemaster; and secondly, the key to interesting and challenging encounters is to fit the degree of hazard to the ability of the characters to deal with it.

The third cardinal rule I learned during my next brush with role-play, at Origins II in Baltimore. I took part in the *D&D* tournament. Again, a disaster; thrown into a group with fourteen players I'd never seen before, my attempts at participation were squelched by the one or two vehemently vocal members of the group. The third rule: role-playing is best among friends, with the corollary to this rule being that, among friends, all should be allowed their chance to participate.

After two such experiences, I almost didn't come back to *D&D*; fortunately, one of my New York gang, Tim Slack, had obtained a copy of the rules and our group began to explore his dungeon. Being a former U.S. Army Engineer, his place was a marvel of architecture, and it was liberally sprinkled with elements from the New York scene (a subway, a massage parlor) to keep things refreshingly light.

It was but a small step from being a player of *D&D* to designing my own worlds of adventure. I designed my first two dungeons, The Enchanted Castle (complete with a black cauldron guarded by three cats who metamorphosed into witches when attacked) and The Haunted House (with Harold, the ghostly butler; a "living room" with living furniture; and The Library, with a talking portrait). I'm still using these two, with refinements, with new players.

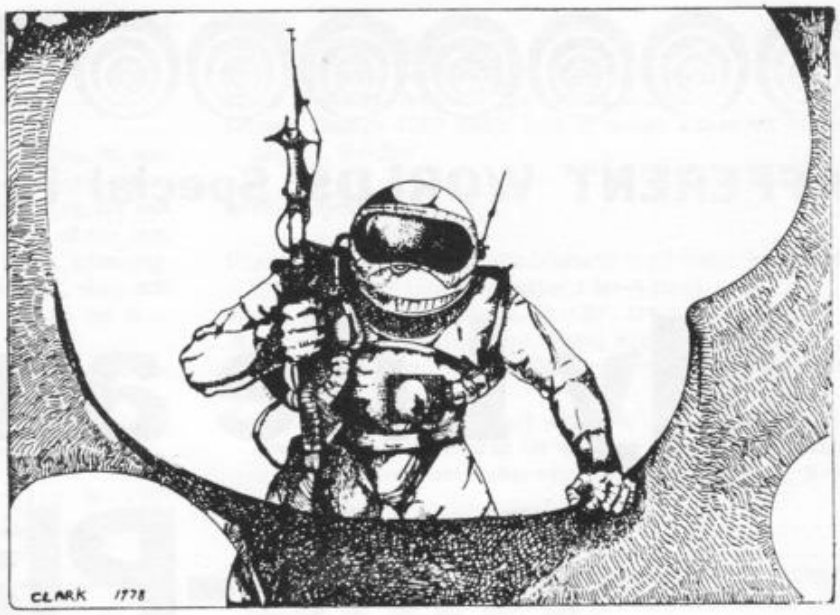
Shortly thereafter, our group became involved in an extended campaign that lasted months, traversing miles of countryside and several castles, including a picturesque detour to The Island of Lost Souls. I ran several characters in this world, my favorite being a Rabbi whose constant companion was Chazzar, the magic pig, as the Rabbi was the only one in the party who didn't want to turn him into pork chops! Although our progress

was dogged by a vengeful vampire (woe to those who heard "the flapping of leathery wings" while on midnight guard duty), we eventually triumphed in a climactic battle against The Acid Queen and her champion, Apollo Creed.

Through these adventures, I learned a lot about the nature of role-play, and many of these observations saw print in an article I did for *Campaign* magazine with Charlie Elsden, called "Introduction to Yourself: D&D for Beginners". The most important lesson I learned was what I see as the fourth cardinal rule: when playing a character, one should *play his role*. That is, the best play results when a player fully understands his character, and tries to act as he thinks his character might in a given situation. While this is sometimes not the best course of action, it makes for a much better game overall. In addition to reconfirming the first three cardinal rules, I also discovered the importance of a sense of humor in role-play.

If *D&D* was so fulfilling, one may ask, what possessed me to design *Starships & Spacemen*. Well, first off, I was very dissatisfied with the rambling, disorganized nature of *D&D*'s rules, which do not leave one with any idea of how to play the game after one has read them. There were other points in the *D&D* system that annoyed me; for example, the fact that a player's abilities did not get better with experience but, strangely enough, the amount of damage he could sustain did! I also had my "consciousness raised" by a woman in our group, Lee Buckley, who pointed out the limitations of the game vis-a-vis female characters. Lastly, and most importantly, by the end of our campaign the possibilities of play were severely hampered by what I term "fantasy inflation." Our DM, Scott McPartland, was an avid practitioner of the second rule of role-play, namely, that the challenge should fit the character's capabilities. By the end of the campaign, our characters were sufficiently advanced in power that the boundaries of fantasy had to be stretched to find a suitable challenge. ("Fantasy inflation" was probably the chief factor responsible for the failure of the last of the original booklets, "Gods, Demi-gods, and Heroes"). In short, I was looking for new worlds to conquer.

As I stated in *S&S*, the idea for a *Star Trek* role-play game was first suggested to me by Anita Cohen, another in our group, after an adventure in our fantasy campaign. I applied design techniques I had employed designing more conventional games, including *Cromwell*, to the role-play genre. The game was a big hit in my group, successfully capturing the flavor of *Star Trek* while incorporating other elements of science fiction and correcting many of the deficiencies of the



original *D&D* that had bothered me. For example, in *S&S* characters have inborn abilities, like physical strength, which cannot be improved upon, while acquired abilities, like intelligence and technical skill, improve with experience. In addition, physical attributes are much less important in *S&S* than in *D&D*; one value, strength, encompasses the considerations of physical power, constitution, and the amount of damage a player can sustain. Since damage is limited, the weaponry in *S&S* remains lethal, whether a character is a 1st level ensign or an 8th level admiral. In addition, since physical strength is downplayed, women characters more than hold their own in *S&S*. Using Mr. Spock's "infinite diversity in infinite combinations" as my guideline, *S&S* explores the interrelationships between various races and sexes as one of its fundamental themes. Each race and sex in *S&S* is different and unique, with its own particular advantages and disadvantages. While the sexes are *not* the same in *S&S*, they are at least equal (although, in my opinion, female characters are probably superior, gaining more in charisma and psionics than they lose in strength, a fact which my current group has failed to realize). The races of *S&S* have different biologies, something which an astute gamesmaster (and astute players) can use in employing novel solutions in a variety of situations.

I thought S&S would be the first Sci-Fi RPG on the market.

Once *S&S* was designed, I began looking for a publisher. Since this was before either Traveller or Metamorphosis Alpha was published, I thought *S&S* would be the first science-fiction role play game on the market. I finally found Scott Bizar, of Fantasy Games, and, while Scott was a never-failing source of encouragement and inspiration, the vagaries of the publishing business dictated that *S&S* did not see print until after these other games were on the market. *S&S* was designed independently of these, and concentrates on different aspects of role play. (Traveller, to the best of my understanding, confines characters to humans only and is intimately concerned with the conomics of space, while *S&S* is probably one of the least competitive role-play games around, being completely lacking in money with the only rewards being the advancement of one's character and self-satisfaction in a job well done).

Since *S&S* was published, I keep running across elements I would have liked to have included in the game. It seems that every heroic fantasy or sci-fi book I read has something to offer, and I keep mentally translating the action in the books into gaming terms. Hopefully, some of these elements will see the light of day in this or other publications in the field, as I see the designer as having a responsibility to keep his game fresh after publication. Fear not, however, there are no plans for dollar-consuming "supplements" to *S&S*, and the game, with the exception of the inescapable typos, is complete as it stands.

I would like to close this article with a few thoughts on what I see as the future of role-play. First, and most importantly, I see role-play games as a tremendous opportunity to get new people from all spectrums involved in gaming, especially more women (since wargaming is a 99% male endeavor). It seems easier for women to identify with an elf-princess than with Rommel. From a personal viewpoint, I was able to get my wife, who cannot understand my fascination with games, to try role-play and, to both of our surprise, to enjoy it.

Secondly, I see role-play as an opportunity for people to learn more about themselves and the people they live with. By exploring the possibilities of different courses of actions, even to the point of different morality systems, through the "safe" medium of fantasy, people can learn who they are and why they think and act the way they do. The original *D&D* brings one amazingly close to the archetypes of Jungian psychology (the wise old man, the young hero), and may help us peer into our "collective unconscious." Although role-play can deteriorate into a childish enterprise, there is more to be gained in role-play than an afternoon of vicarious thrills offing monsters and scooping up the loot. At its best, role-play offers a challenge to our wits and our wiles, while extending the potential for insight into ourselves. With a good gamesmaster, in the company of good friends, an adventure in role-playing can be a stimulating and satisfying experience for those willing to extend themselves.

NIALL SHAPERO

Niall's publication, The Lords of Chaos, *is probably the most carefully edited APA of them all. Which probably explains its irregular publication. Well maybe not irregular, but regularly a bit late. But I'll let Niall explain. . .*

Memories

One fine Saturday morning in October, 1974, I drove to the home of a fellow wargamer in Redwood City, California. Fully prepared for an afternoon (and evening) of miniatures battles, I was more than slightly surprised to find the sandtable totally unprepared and all figures still stacked on the shelves. I was not amused.

The regular Saturday crowd was all playing this strange and incomprehensible pen and paper game called *Dungeons and Dragons,* and would not deign to involve themselves in anything quite so mundane as a miniature's battle. Not being a sword and sorcery nut at the time, I decided to head for saner (?) regions, and returned to Berkeley.

It took, I think, all of three weeks before I overcame my rather prejudiced opinion of the game to sit down and read the rules. As no one in Berkeley had a copy of the rules, this meant a "short" trip to acquire same. Six of U.C. Berkeley's finest cramed into my BMW, and we proceeded to cover most, if not all, of the gameshops in the San Francisco Bay Area in search of the rules. Some six hours, eighty miles, and several frayed tempers later, we discovered 1 (one) rule set in some out-of-the-way game shop.

Within a week, we had xeroxed relevant portions of the three original books and were straining mightily to create our first dungeons. In those dark days, this was no easy task. The original rules were a mass of contradictions, vague in the extreme regarding many points key to (our) play, and, in general, somewhat less than useful. I think that the first three weeks saw each of us produce at least two small dungeon complexes each, no two of them run under the same set of "rules."

Chaos reigned for the better part of the next year. Arguments over rule interpretations took up almost as much time as dungeoning, and it was not unusual for stands to change regarding said interpretations on an almost daily basis. The arguments went on for hours and hours, stretching through several days. And at least one of our number flunked out of Berkeley at least in part due to the amount of time spent arguing and playing *D&D* as opposed to studying.

It was the year of the gilded hole, and our dungeons were just that, and nothing more. No societies were built around those gold-lined holes-in-the-ground, and adventures existed in a strange limbo between expeditions into the netherworld.

Our days of isolation were, of course, numbered. For most of that first year, our contact with other *D&D*ers wad distinctly limited (we had far better things to do with our time on weekends, after all, than drive across the bay to the only other group we knew that played the game). But at that same time, in Los Angeles, a

It was the year of the gilded hole. . .

bright-eyed pixie named Lee Gold was laying the groundwork for a, dare I say it, international forum for *D&D* players.

It was at the 1975 *WesterCon* that I first met Lee. It was my first science fiction convention, and though the rest of the Fourth of July weekend passed in something of a blur, I still remember that encounter quite clearly. I was talking with some random LA fan about *D&D* (said fan being one Jack Harness) when a short, stout, brunette bundle of energy came bouncing by.

"You like *D&D?* Well then, you'll just *love* this!" she said, thrusting a copy of *Alarums and Excursions* under my nose. The price was reasonable and, what the devil, I was at a convention anyway. . . That evening, as I sat reading that first fanzine/APA of many yet to come, a new urge began to build within me. Here, at last, was a place that my humble scribblings might actually be printed and, perhaps, even be COMMENTED UPON! EGO-BOO. I had finally gone round the bend.

My first contribution to *A&E* did not see print until *A&E #6* or thereabouts (though I do remember with a certain fondness a review of my dungeon that appeared in, I think, issue four or five). And during the Golden Age of *A&E*, I was one of the regular contributers. For nearly two years, in fact, I found myself thoroughly entangled with the contributer side of that fan publishing project.

A number of fan fueds developed in *A&E* as the readership and distribution increased and divergent gaming philosophies came into contact with each other. It was, of course, inevitable that eventually people would start screaming at each other over the game; the rules were so incoherent as to virtually guarantee divergent interpretations. And, of course, as *A&E* was the only real forum that most of us had, *A&E* was also something of a battle ground for a good many months.

During this same period, my own dungeon/campaign was undergoing something on the order of a major reconstruction. Where once there had been only gilded holes in the ground, a world was growing. Cities rose, trade routes grew, and empires sprang into being, literally overnight. No longer did the adventurer live in limbo between expeditions; now he was a part of a living world where dungeon crawls made up only a small portion of his activities. Needless to say, as the complications grew, expeditions began to take longer and longer to run until towards the end of this period, expeditions were taking in the close neighborhood of thirty hours to run.

In the end, what with the seemingly endless arguments in *A&E*, and the seemingly endless expeditions on the home front, something had to give. But before I threw up my hands in complete disgust, and abandoned fanish circles completely, I decided to give the world of *D&D* fandom one more try.

On the home front, I restricted the gaming hours to weekends, and tried to keep even those weekend hours reasonably limited. As a result, surprisingly enough, the games actually improved in quality (something about the DM and players not being completely exhausted half way through the expedition might have had something to do with it).

And on the fanpubbing front, well . . . For many months I had been toying with the idea of a DM oriented quasi-APA patterned after *A&E* but under stricter editorial control (my own, naturally). Other fan editors had tried to produce something of the sort but I found nothing that matched quite what I wanted in a DM oriented zine. And so, after a little scratching around for articles and a LOT of scratching around for a second-hand mimeo machine, *The Lords of Chaos* was born.

Issue number one of *TLOC* had a copy count of fifty-five, and was twenty-three pages long. It started as a quarterly publication, and that first issue appeared on May 25, 1977. With issue number six,

TLOC went bi-monthly, the copy count went to 200, and the page count went to 82. Out of tiny acorns, mighty oaks do grow.

So, instead of dropping out, I stayed in, and in a big way. Though not yet the size of Lee's *A&E* (160 pages, monthly, and lord help us 650+ copy count), *TLOC* has been growing steadily, sucking me ever deeper into the quagmire of fandom. Of c ourse, there have been occasional slip-ups in the publication schedule; most noticeably when I took a month or so out to move to Los Angeles and marry a fellow *D&D* fanatic, Kay Jones. But *TLOC* still comes out, more or less on time.

It has been an interesting four years, but I have the strange suspicion that the next four will be even more interesting. Where there was once but a single FRP game, now there are several. Where once we (the gaming public) had to make do with rules that were vague at best, and incomprehensible gibberish at worst, we now have the clear and, heaven forbid, understandable rules of *Runequest, spacequest,* and *Chivalry and Sorcery*. The quality of the FRP games continues to improve, though one small problem, sadly, now must come to the fore.

What with *Alarums and Excursions* and *The Lords of Chaos* in LA, *Different Worlds* in the San Francisco Bay Area, *The Wild Hunt* in Boston all crying out desperately for articles, with at least four different FRP games calling out to be played, with world to be built, and histories begging to be written, where does one find the time to breathe?

KEN ST ANDRE

Ken is one of the more prolific game designers around, preferring to stick mainly with fantasy and sci-fi. He is the editor for Flying Buffalo's new magazine, Sorcerer's Apprentice.

It Grows on You

I don't know when I first heard the old saying about life being a game, but I've always believed it. And I've never really been content to just play other people's games—I'm always messing with the rules, trying this or that variation.

Let me introduce myself—Ken St. Andre, at your service. I'm a native of Phoenix, Arizona, now in my 31st year of existence in my current incarnation. My chief claim to fame in gaming is that I didn't like the mechanics of *Dungeons and Dragons* on first sight, though I loved the basic idea of fantasy role-playing. I didn't set out to compete with *D&D*—it just happened, but the battle has been joined for a couple of years now, and there's no end in sight. I'll get to the genesis of *Tunnels and Trolls* later. Right now, let me get back to my gruesome self-portrait.

Six feet tall, brown-haired (once thick but now thinning), near-sighted as a bat, 180 lbs., I am an indifferent though not totally worthless swordsman, I like large-breasted women, and am married to one named Cathy. Since the 7th grade, I have been a reader and collector of fantasy and science fiction, starting with Edgar Rice Burroughs and moving in steady quest of the bizarre to ever more obscure authors and mythologies. I have always been a social misfit (and will always be one, I think). Introverted, my tendancy is to run around with a small circle of very close friends and generally ignore the rest of the world. I admire extroverts, but don't like them. I have always done well academically and finally wound up with a Master's degree in Library Science. I have a large and steadily growing book collection of which I am unreasonably proud and protective; nevertheless, it has been harshly weeded and only the cream of all the books I've ever purchased are still with me. I have a complete run of the Marvel Conan comics. I was one of the original founders of the Kingdom of Atenveldt which is the local branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism in Phoenix, but I dropped out of it in 1971 when a lady broke my heart, and I never really went back.

It seems like my whole life has been spent inventing games. The first one I ever did used the Monopoly board, pieces, and dice, and was a simple race game, with the railroads, corners, chance, and community chest places acting as traps to slow or kill the moving figures. Another early invention was combat chess. The rules are exactly the same as regular chess, but when you attempt to take a piece, the two pieces fight it out and the winner remains on the board. (The attacking piece gets 3 dice while the defending piece only gets 2, doubles or triples add and roll over). I can't remember how many different varieties of War I invented with cards before I ever knew there was such a game.

High school was devoted to World War II, the jungles of Tarzan, and the dead sea bottoms of *Barsoom*. Those games, which filled many an afternoon for me and my friends have all perished long ago. Most of those friends are gone, too. Only one space war game that literally took over our local science fiction club meetings for about a month. The Romulans tended to sin a lot, but the Federation was always tough.

And the process continues. It seems that I get at least one new game idea per week, often more. Needless to say, most of them never even get as far as being put down on paper. Such a game is Tarot Bridge—a little trickier than regular contract bridge (15 to 13), but should be a lot of fun to play for those who are mystically inclined.

I never planned to be a game designer for profit. What I always wanted to do was write fantasy. But due to a lack of drive and an inability to face rejection slips, I never made it as an sf writer, though I've been trying since I was 18. One rejection slip and I don't submit anything professionally for one to two years. Consequently I have very few rejection slips, and even fewer sales. (None that count for anything outside gaming.) Well, if fantasy gaming is to be my metier, than I intend to make the most of it.

Which brings me back to *Tunnels and Trolls*, and the great debt I owe Gygax and Arneson. In January of 1975 I began to hear about a new game called Dungons and Dragons from some of my correspondents. It sounded fascinating, but it hadn't reached Phoenix and no one I knew had actually ever played. Finally, in April I got the chance to examine the original *D&D* Rulebooks. I sat down where I was and studied them for about two hours. When I had finished I was convinced of several things: (1) that the basic ideas were tremendous, even revolutionary, but that (2) as then written the mechanics of play were nearly incomprehensible, and (3) that the game rules cost far more than they should and (4) that 4, 8, 10, 12, and 20-sided dice were too much to bother with. As I stood up I vowed that I would create my own version of the game that I could play immediately and that would correct all the other things I thought wrong with *D&D*. And I started on it that evening, and worked straight through for a week devising a basic set of alternatives to the *D&D* rules. Since that time I have never studied the *D&D* rulebooks again.

In about a week I was ready to try my fantasy game on my friends. They went berserk. They loved it. Some borrowed my one typed set of rules and photocopied them. Others just wanted to borrow and keep my rules. Those rules were getting dirty and worn-out fast, so I offered to get them printed up in enough copies that everyone could have a set. The idea was popular.

By that time other people had begun to have an effect on the development of the rules. Steve McAllister had aided greatly with the invention of the spells. He and Bear Peters had also come up with their chart for personalizing various types of humanoid monsters. Greg and Hilde Brown had suggested a system of dealing with missle combat. Probably the biggest change was in the name. Everyone was calling it *Dungeons and Dragons* around Phoenix at that time. I knew we couldn't do that. (Incidentally, Gary, I want to

compliment you on a remarkably good choice of a name for a fantasy game. *Dungeons and Dragons* says it all!) I have always loved alliteration (and other poetic techniques. Would anyone out there like to see some fantasy poetry some time?), so I decided to call my creation *Tunnels and Troglodites.*

Needless to say that cognomen went over like a lead balloon. First the gang laughed me out of the room; then they called me back and told me that *Tunnels and Trolls* was more reasonable. Well, it sounded a bit simple to me, but you all know what happened. . . .

1975 was my last real year of leisure. I had my new degree in library science, but no job to go with it, so I was able to sit down and work on writing rules in an organized fashion for a solid month. It was at that time (May to June) that the detailed weapons charts were created. I twisted Rob Carver's arm until he did some art for the thing. I wanted something I could look at as well as play with. I arranged to have it printed at my own expense (100 copies cost me $60 at the Arizona State University print shop). I got McAllister and Peters to collect and collate the thing, and I went off for a month's vacation with my wife to Lake Tahoe and San Francisco. I planned to meet them at the *WesterCon* in Oakland over the Fourth of July and see how it came out.

It came out pretty well. The cover of the first edition shows a chunky unicorn watching over a large-breasted maiden who is bathing in a pool, and the words on the cover are: ". . . perpetrated on an unsuspecting world by Ken St. Andre, Robin Carver, Mark Anthony, James Peters, et al. of the Phoenix Cosmic Circle." The title "Tunnels and Trolls" showed up at the bottom of the first page (Contents and Malcontents). We sold about 10 copies at *WesterCon* in '75, and first met Liz Danforth.

When I got home I had about 40 copies of the original 100 that I didn't know what to do with. Rick Loomis, owner-manager of the infamous Flying Buffalo computer games house, agreed to try and sell them for me. He sold them very easily and approached me with an offer to manufacture and distribute the game. The rest is history. T&T has gone through 3 revisions and a supplement, and is currently being revised again—for the last time I hope. Sales have continued to grow.

Around the end of that year Howard Thompson asked me to do a fantasy role-playing game for Metagaming. I already had one in hand. For a couple of months I had been toying with the reverse of the original premise. Instead of humans raiding and plundering the home territory of monsters, evil wizards, etc., why not play the bad guys in their evil attacks on mankind? Thus, *Monsters! Monsters!* was born. At Howard's urging I put together a game manuscript for *M!M!* as quickly as I could and sent it off to him before the year was over, complete with illustrations, and suggestions on how to print and market it. Howard didn't really care for my ideas. First of all he decided it needed a color cover, and then he decided that Steve Jackson should edit it for clarity. All this took a long time. It was the middle of 1976 before the game was ready to print, and production costs had risen. Is it any wonder that *T&T* which was selling then for $3 a copy greatly outsold *M!M!* which went for $7, even though *M!M!* was slick and beautiful by comparison?

It seems my whole life has been spent inventing games.

We've had a few firsts with *T&T* in the gaming field. Solitaire dungeons, a means of fantasy-role-playing without anyone else needed, are the brain-child of Steve McAllister. Rick Loomis actually wrote the first (and still one of the best) of them: *Buffalo Castle.* I wrote the second: *Deathtrap Equalizer Dungeon* in February 1976. We were the first to get a foreign publisher: *Games and Puzzles* in England. They re-edited the game again, probably to their detriment, as I have had letters from England comparing the American to the British volume and saying they preferred my wording. This year (1978) we (Flying Buffalo and I) issued the first directory of *T&T* players. For 1979 we will have our own calendar. We try to innovate, not just commercialize.

One thing that has always seemed ironic to me is that others reap the chief benefits from my game. Illustrating *T&T* has developed into a full-time job for Liz Danforth with Flying Buffalo. Bear, Steve, Liz, everyone I know have wonderful high level characters to play with—my best is an 8th level warrior maid. And so it goes. But it's been fun. It almost makes up for not being a well-known fantasy writer. And it's still growing, still evolving.

One controversy that has come up is whether *T&T* has the right to imitate *D&D.* Ideas and systems are not copyrightable. Nor is *T&T* in any respect a plagiarism of *D&D.* Combat and magical systems are radically different, and growing further apart as time goes on. The point we like to make is that *T&T* can do everything that *D&D* does, but in a simpler and easier way.

Another point that all should consider is that people have the right to innovate, to offer alternatives, to go on with other games and systems. The advent of *Chivalry and Sorcery, Runequest, The Fantasy Trip, Legacy,* and others is healthy and right. There is room for more than one FRP system in the world, room for more than one interpretation of anything. I believe the FRP gamers I most admire are those that combine different game systems and make their own unique creations. That's involvement and originality!

Well, enough of history, sermon, and apologetic. Keep growing, and may you always make your saving roll!

STEVE MARSH

Steve Marsh is your basic Fantasy Role Playing fanatic. He's been involved with it ever since Dungeons & Dragons *first hit the streets. He has worked with Gary Gygax and is a regular contributor to* Alarums and Excursions, The Wild Hunt *and* The Lords of Chaos.

The Long Lasting Effects of My Religion 231 Class

By the time I entered fifth grade, I had learned not to study. Years of schooling had encouraged students to be the same, and this left my outlook passive. Then I encountered blackmail.

My teacher allowed me to read *The Hobbit*. But I didn't get any more books until I began to study. As soon as my grades picked up, I got to read *The Fellowship of the Ring*. But *The Two Towers* waited until my grades improved again. Russel (*Men, Martians and Machines*) and Twain)*Letters from the Earth*) followed Tolkien. Before I knew it I had become a student and a lifetime addict to F&SF.

In 1972 a friend introduced me to SPI's *Napoleon at Waterloo*. Before long I had subscribed and begun a modest game collection. I am still working on a boardgame I started then. But the fall of 1974, when I encountered *D&D* underground, randomly, in Religion 231, is the true landmark.

I had been developing a fantasy world, drawing guidelines for it from my philosophy classes and some multi-dimensional concepts of my own. Races, peoples, and dynamic set-ups had been prepared and I was trying to work up a way to game it all. Never having used (or even heard of) miniatures rules, I stood at an impasse.

Wandering into my LDS Philosophy (Religion 231) class one day, I sat down next to this guy holding the strangest set of graphs I had ever seen, and floor plans and a hipogriff-illoed book caught my eyes. Soon thereafter I managed to sit next to this collection again, and could ask about it. That is when I met *Dungeons and Dragons*.

Roll three characters and play one: Intelligence 14, Charisma 12, all else 9 or worse. . . looks great! But what to do with him? Intelligence goes with magic users? A name? Elaikases would be good (it was the name of a major character in my game). Thus I began to play *D&D*.

I played in a hard-keyed world using Jack Vance magic and *Chainmail* combat. Since I had read Vance short stories and *Eyes of the Overworld* (the latter as I went through BYU's back issues of *Fantastic* looking for "Dilvish the Damned" stories) as well as Moorcock, I enjoyed the magic system and understood alignment fairly well.

Before long I read the rules and found out that life in a hard-keyed world was hard. But life and gaming were great, and I never knew what to expect or how to expect it. Everything was new and fresh, and that time may never come again. Since then the sense of wonder and bewilderment has fled. In many ways roleplaying has become almost mundane.

As happens with all beginning *D&D*-ers, I found things I didn't understand. The rules ask players to write for clarifications, so I wrote, and Gary wrote back. I guess that times have changed, but in those days the gaming world resembled the Garden of Eden. I say this to emphasize that I indeed viewed it through rose-colored glasses. In that period letters were answered, all new ideas were well-treated, and I changed from a confused neophyte to a writer of rules.

Gary's warmth and friendliness encouraged me to submit ideas and to share what happened to me. Before long this blossomed into my name and ideas in print in both supplements and TSR (TSR Hobbies, Inc.) publications.

In 1975 I started a *D&D* pbm (play by mail) in response to a request by Jim Cooper, played in a *Midgard* rules fantasy pbm, and began corresponding with Sean Summers. I also went on a volunteer mission for the LDS ("Mormon") Church which took up to ninety hours a week of my time.

My relations with TSR improved until I was asked to author a supplement. Due to other commitments I eventually wasn't able to do it, and TSR and I began to drift in different ways. TSR was expanding, coping with one of the many mishaps to have come upon them, and I was busy

I never knew what to expect.

with my own life.

All this time my game was in many ways a mirror of TSR's. Most of my questions had been discussed with or answered by Gary Gygax, and I had met very few other gamers. Most of my gaming had been conducted via the Post Office (after I left BYU) and I had never heard of spell points, critical hits, or any of the other things that seem to come up in every game.

In March of 1977 I came home (home having moved from Germany to California—what happened to the *D&D*ers my brother and his girlfriend left in Germany I know not). My Dad noticed a wargaming club notice and directed me to it.

That is how I met Kevin Slimak and thus *A&E* [*Alarms and Excursions*], *TWH* [*The Wild Hunt*], and the world existing outside of TSR. *A&E* meant meeting *A&E* contributors, and Kevin Slimak meant going to GLASC (a Los Angeles gaming convention) and writing for *A&E*, which I did initially just to get some new blood for my pbm.

Concurrently the shared work and ideas of Sean Summers and myself expanded into the planes of reality (Ice, Fire, Earth, Water, Air) that I did first privately and then for Judges Guild. Jim Cooper and some anthropology yielded the fruits of the system I'd started back in 1973, and I put together the bones of my personal fantasy role-playing system (the mana system) in *A&E* to establish my claim on the ideas.

And that is up to the present. My gaming life and acquaintances have begun to expand and unfold like a flower. May the fruit thereof be sweet!

What This Has Meant to Me

The impact of role-playing games on my life is more than the kilos of correspondence and reference works on my shelves, more than the pages of rules and the money spent on APAs (Amateur Press Association) and magazines: the impact has been in the relationships I've made, the people I've met, the ideas shared and many ways my mind has been opened.

Sure, it means social encounters with friends. It means (perhaps) fiscal loss or gain. At times it means anger and hope, love and fear, all in their time and place and needed portion. But the sum is greater than the whole, just as a flower is more than color or scent or growing tissue. Gaming is more than paper and words and typewriter keys: it is a part of my life and I would be less without it.

What it will mean to me in the future I don't know. Perhaps I'll flow into different streams, or maybe I'll get lucky and make the big-time for real, but hopefully I'll remain alive and somewhat vital (as in living) and not slip into the dank, stale fens that have mired so many. I won't know until after it is over. I hope that it will have been good.

Where Here Is

Here is the frantic time of my senior year, and of trying for grad schools. Here is a time once more of writing rules sets and variants and ideas, and hoping they'll work. It is a time of submissions to TSR and JG and *ATWM* [*All the Worlds' Monsters*] and my own personalzine. It is a time of *A&E* and *TWH* and wondering if its worth the effort to write.

At this time, in this place, I am trying to enter the mainstream which I left during the two years spent in the NY Rochester Mission. My scholastic destiny is reaching another turning point and my personal life is marked by increased activity on all fronts.

But here is also a time for creating a copper-based world. It is a time for building a role-playing world from not Tolkien, Anderson, Norton, or Stafford but from my own foundations. Strangely enough, in the midst of everything, my DMing (Dungeon-Mastering) nearly has disappeared, making now a very good time to change.

The hobby is in a similar place. Many of the people in it are turning corners. Some are finding FRP (fantasy role-playing) forced out of their lives. Others have found their lives forced out by FRP (Dave Hargrave is presently, Gary Gygax already has), and are entering that world in all its glory. Now is the halcyon time's end. The peaceful, undisturbed world has ended and what will come of the children born now, like the chicks of the kingfisher I do not know. The winter is upon is, but it is the end of the winter that for all its fierceness brings the promise of spring.

May your roots grow deep and your metaphors mix!

MARC W. MILLER

I'm glad Marc was able to submit his article in time for this issue. Working for a game company leaves very little time to do anything but design and research games.

My Life in Role Playing

Strange is the word to describe my life in role-playing; in fact, in looking back I find that I was in the field before I knew about it, and for longer that it seems possible. It all started back in 1968, in a political science class at the University of Illinois. My introduction to role-playing took the form of a hypothetical political nominating convention, with the students taking the roles of candidates and political aides. (I came within a hair's breadth of getting a Barry Goldwater type conservative nominated as democratic presidential candidate.) When I came back to school in 1972, I immediately became involved in boardgames, and simultaneously signed on as designer (soon head designer) at *SIMRAD*, located at Illinois State University. *SIMRAD* was an innovative education project, envisioned as a simulation souce for instructors; they issued specifications for simulations, we designed them, and then administered them in the classroom (thus, SIMulation, Research, Administration, and Design). In the course of 18 months with *SIMRAD*, I (actually we, much of the workshop staff worked at various levels in *SIMRAD*) put together about 8 games, of which more than half were educational role-playing games. In general, such games simulate presidential nominating conventions, or elections, or passing a bill in congress; anything political, and relatively simple. *SIMRAD* folded in 1973, and the staff formed the core of Game Designers' Workshop—we immediately set about producing historical boardgames, such as *Drang Nach Osten!, Unentschieden, Chaco, Triplanetary* and *Eagles*. Board games were to be our mainstay for several years to come.

In about 1974, a group of gamers (at the University of Illinois) introduced our crew to *Dungeons & Dragons*. Initially, we played from xeroxes of the rules booklets; we couldn't wait for an order to be filled before we started. (An aside on ethics—I think it's perfectly proper to xerox the entire set of rules booklets and use them; we had placed orders for the games, and when the sets arrived, we threw the xeroxes away). The effort we devoted to *D&D*, to variants, to campaigns, and to dungeons, took a lot of time, and slowed our own output tremendously. Eventually, we slacked off, just so we could get our boardgame production going. But, before our *D&D* activity was shelved, Mike Bartnikowski (one of the big wheel wargamers who threw *Origins* at Ann Arbor this year) came down to visit. He saw *D&D* in progress, and (it being a new game to him) was spurred to get a copy and introduce it in Michigan. Thus, *D&D*, so big in Michigan, was introduced there through GDW.

In 1975, GDW entered the role-playing field in a small way with *En Garde!* Unfortunately, I had very little association with that design.

My entrance into the field was with the publication of *Traveller*, at *Origins, 1977*. In general, my orientation has been toward the realistic, rather than the fantastic, and always towards the science-fiction genre. It was natural, when my mind turned to role-playing that I chose to do a science-fiction game. *Traveller* was the result.

my orientation has been toward the realistic, rather than the fantastic

Covering *Traveller* could well be an entirely independent project, but my experiences over the past two years have made a couple of points quite clear in my mind.

The first is the subject of sexism in gaming. Wargames (by that, I mean the boardgame end of the wargaming spectrum) are generally played by males; women simply aren't interested. Fantasy role-playing games are an entirely new field, and don't yet have the barriers to women that the other games do. I think it's very important to keep the FRP field open to women, and that means an almost conscious effort on the part of designers. If you look at modern fantasy literature, you can easily find women working and fighting as central characters, not as hangers-on. Such activity is rarely historical, but it is a reflection of what modern fantasy is. I think that role-playing games should reflect this as well. All it needs is a simple caution that the roles covered need not be restricted by gender, and some attention to pronouns throughout the game.

My second comment is essentially a statement of disappointment. When I started *Traveller*, I thought that one very viable use of the game was to simulate the course of the current science-fiction literature. Not necessarily to follow the plot line, but to take the situation from some story that all the players had read, assign characters using the names from the story, and see where things went from there. Instead, I find that most of the players haven't read the story! Is it my small world, or is it true that most science-fiction gamers don't really read science-fiction?

Traveller is not the extent, however, of my role-playing life. Although I run a *Traveller* universe, and play in a couple of others, I also play in some other games (notably *D&D*, and Frank Chadwick's prototype *If I Were King . . .* system). And I am hard at work on a long-term project titled *Companions of the Road*, a fantasy role-playing game (of course) which concentrates more on demons than dragons and more on the wilderness than on dungeons.

MARK A. SWANSON

Mark is the editor of The Wild Hunt, *an important East Coast APA. He keeps mentioning a guy named Glenn Blacow. Is he supposed to be a somebody?*

Trapped Four Years in the Gilded Hole

Four years ago I fell into a Gilded Hole. I'm out now, but the hole's remains are still a blot on the landscape and I intend to move.

I originally started a campaign using Arneson's and Gygax's *Dungeons & Dragons* rules in a quest for realism. At that point the local games involved everyone starting with forty super-loyal vassals for whom you bought war horses and plate, then went dragon hunting. This did not fit any fantasy story I had ever read, nor, as I eventually discovered, was it in the rules. Of course a lot of things weren't in the rules, such as the magic system. In my boardgaming group, accustomed to exploiting every possible loophole, the players spent a lot of time arguing just what the rules did say.

My campaign had one character per player, no hirelings, and a determination that neither loopholes nor rules arguments were going to wreck it. This was before *Grayhawk*, so there were a limited number of rules. It also had the first local dungeon, Gorree. After all, that was the purpose of the game, to go down into the Gilded Holes and bring back treasure. Over the next year or so I developed my

own "Klutz" magic system, had "Swanson Tables" (for providing minor variations in first level characters) published in *Alarums & Excursions* 1, and found a growing disinterest in the whole idea.

The boring routine of "Bash the door and kill the monsters, break the traps and then march on" was getting to me. It would have made a lousy fantasy story: why were all those monsters living down there, conveniently close to civilization? Where was all that gold coming from? What else were the characters doing? And what the heck was medieval feudalism doing with all that self-propelled artillery available? (It pretended it was magicians, but I know mortars, flame throwers and laser rifles when I see them!) The society made no sense, was unrealistic: it was impossible to suspend disbelief.

No one else seemed to care. Kevin Slimak was running *Hellsgate*, as deadly a pure dungeon campaign as I ever avoided, to great popular acclaim. Without an audience, why bother trying?

Glenn Blacow (a.k.a. The Black Beast of Boston) changed all that. He had been running in *Midgard Limited* long before Gygax published *D&D*. (This was a by-mail campaign where everyone was designing and running their own grossly powerful characters.) He started running *Edwyr*, which was a game with a distinct, though weird (originally: 'cute'), flavor to it. He also ran his characters in character, rather than following a minimax game strategy.

The thought occurred to me that I didn't have to stay in the dungeon, or out in the chaotic wilderness. with some work and pressure on the players, I could get that fantasy epic rolling at last. I invented a government, dragged in my super-race the Lenta, and started complicating life for the characters, leading off a localized armageddon.

After a year I locked up *Gorree* dungeon: it just didn't fit any more. Unfortunately, neither did the rules. The five or six local "compatible" games called the Multiverse were running by then. Most of the characters in my scenarios played in them, since I didn't run often.

This sort of organization is very useful, especially for those whose games run seldom. Aias, the Multiverse has its price. The characters go elsewhere, and bring the loot back to Gorree. Some GMs give out more experience, or accept stranger foreign characters. There is currently a saying "*Edwyr* has eleven 11th Level player MUs, but only two wizards."

Oh those magicians! And the fighters in AC-8! And the mountains of money! My poor monsters keep getting schmucked in the open, as the fireballs and lightning bolts fly. How could this

"Put FRP back in the dungeon where it belongs!"

all-offense, no-defense society survive? I've grafted in defensive magic, but it doesn't work that well and is clumsy. *D&D* economics is a joke: almost any character is rich enough to buy a peasant village.

After TSR's *Swords & Spells* came out, I tried to produce my own mass combat rules. Unfortunately, I wanted pikemen, cavalry, the feel of pre-gunpowder war. The *D&D* magic rules insisted on producing mass combat with optimal tactics and troop types similar to those for TSR's *Tractics WW II* rules

The personal combat system tends towards long hacking sessions, as the monsters and characters attrition away, often with the only characters dead those that died of critical hits. The rest of the Multiverse has a lot more magic armor and weapons than Gorree, while if I equipped the monsters as well as the characters I'd soon be in a weapons race. Unlike some of the other GMs, I find -4, chaotically aligned plate and shield difficult to believe in.

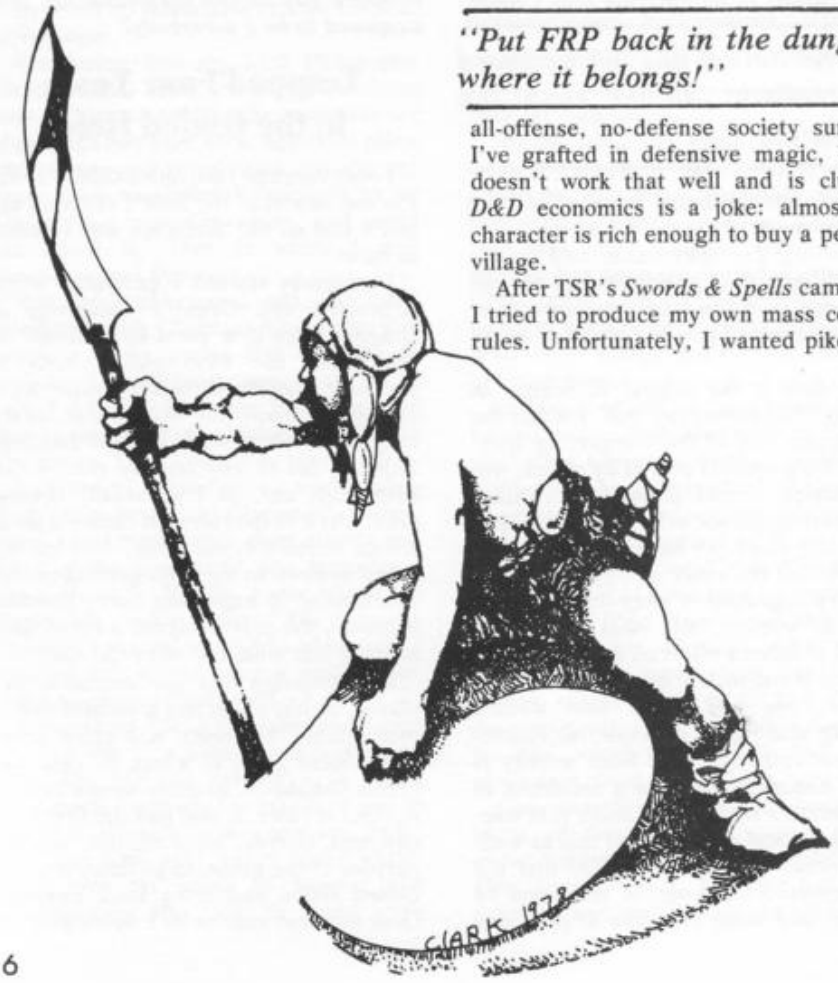
My call to "Put FRP back in the dungeon where it belongs" was not serious, but I don't have another solution yet. (Work has been busy and I haven't had time nor interest in fixing things.) I *have* decided that whatever I do won't be designed for dungeoning. Gorree dungeon is locked up tight, but its children keep appearing: any outdoors party with a fifth level *D&D* magician belongs to a future war, one with no place for swordsmen, heavy cavalry, or similar anachronisms.

and the moral is. . .

My Fantasy Roleplaying interests are inconsistent, realistic swords and sorcery fantasy. I want a society that characters can get involved with, where the opponents and friends have believable reasons for existing, where the players need believe only three impossible things before breakfast and any borrowed mythos is used with reasonable respect.

I've more or less done this, starting with *D&D*, but its a lot of work and the end result is not *D&D* anymore. Its a kluge, in the true engineering meaning, a patched together, half designed mess of revisions and redesigns to an inappropriate base system. The remaining gaping holes I ignore: little combat occurs outdoors and economics is ignored. There is not much other than adventuring for characters to do, (though I'm always ready to try if someone is interested.)

If I redesign or start over, I'll not use *D&D*. *Empire of the Petal Throne* has a great society, but it uses *D&D* mechanics and there is always this nagging feeling that only Prof. Barker can run it right. *Chivalry & Sorcery* has a lot going for it. For one thing, a real if cleaned up background, plenty of detail and a well-integrated magical society. But the rules are complex, and I'm not thrilled with that society as a background. I want something more Byzantine. If there were a group of GMs interested in running contiguous kingdoms, so we could share background details and players didn't get bored with nothing to do, then maybe I'd



try.

At the moment, I'm considering *Runequest*. The advancement system entirely avoids experience points and character classes, while the mechanics are both simple and believable. Once more, the society doesn't match my tastes, though I'm running a character in a *Runequest* game, the first in the last two years. Maybe I can use *Runequest* mechanics in *Gorree*: but how the heck does a True Catholic paladin bind a spirit? Vexatious.

Still, I'm out of that blasted Gilded Hole at last. I'm certain to find a solution. After all, I've an unlimited supply of Wish rings!

GREG COSTIKYAN

Among his many credits Greg is the designer of Swords and Sorcery, *SPI's fantasy board game. He will be working with Eric Goldberg on SPI's FRP game, still in the planning stages.*

Future Fantasy

It was dawn. The sun was rising over the roofs and pinnacles of Queens, reddish light glinting off the obsidian windows of the Simulations Incorporated Towers. Across the Eastern seaboard, day was slowly beginning. Power demands surged as stoves, airconditioners, lights, and simulation tanks were turned on.

In the squalid city streets, activity had never ceased. Hookers, purveyors of chemical pleasures, and the simulation parlors for those who could not afford their own simulation tanks never closed for the night.

In a low-income development on 86th Street, a man woke up and turned his programmed-dream machine off. He'd been awakened in the gentlest way possible; the dream-programming inserted a voice calling his name at the tag end of his last dream, in response to which his mind hauled himself from REM mode to a waking state. As he arose, pattered into the kitchen, and began to make coffee, a woman in the next apartment sat on a bare wooden floor, surrounded by her own filth; she was gaunt and dessicated, her eyes glazed. Her pleasure centers were being directly stimulated by an electric current, coming from a wall socket and passing through a voltage adaptor, then through electrodes pasted to her skull and into the implant in her brain, implanted in an illegal operation for which she had paid $500 New Dollars.

Sipping his coffee, the man decided he didn't like the pattern on the walls. Moving to the video control by the entrance to the apartment, he fiddled with the controls until the walls displayed a beach in the morning, waves gently breaking against the sand. The six speakers at various points in the room exuded a recording of the gentle sussuration of surf, timed to coincide with the pattern of the waves.

In a simulation parlor in the street below, a young man was rudely jerked from the climactic battle at Yzgirth, in which the combined forces of Men and Dwarves met the Lord of Evil and his mishappen minions. He'd been fighting his way through the Lord of Evil's personal bodyguard, the horrific and fearful Dronks of Oltsch, the Sword Miresbane flashing with its eerie light in his hands, his naked skin protected from the weapons of the enemy by the magical skill of the College of Earth Mages. He found himself in a bare room, taped into a badly padded simulation tank. Cursing, he withdrew his last few New Dollars and inserted them into the machine; one would swear the machines were programmed to yank you from the simulation at vital moments. He settled back into magical warfare with some relief.

In an apartment on the 4th floor of the low-income high-rise, an harassed mother gave into the vociferous demands of her two children, and strapped them into the tank, so they could amuse themselves with the antics of Tars Tarkas and Minnie the Moocher while she cooked breakfast.

. . . a story or simulation could be experienced as if it were reality.

Her children were finding it increasingly difficult to tell the difference between reality and simulation; unfortunately, she was unaware of this. Of course, she herself was quite unintelligent; not by heredity, but by environment. Born in 1978, she had been weaned on TV and 3V. Consequently, she was (to all intents and purposes) illiterate, unable to reason logically, and had few mathematical skills.

In the 1950's, television had achieved wide popularity. For the first ime, individuals could fill their leisure hours without thinking, working, or communicating. The breakdown of society began shortly thereafter; isolation among individuals became the rule as people stayed at home and watched the tube, rather than talking, reading, or going to the local bar. Literacy began to drop off as children watched TV rather than reading. Standards of excellence in TV fare constantly diminished as the lowest common denominator among TV viewers dropped with the decreasing literacy and real intelligence in the population. In the 1980's, holographic technology was brought to the point where three dimensional television became practicable. In the 1970's, the first commercial conflict simulations appeared on the market. Originally, these were simple paper-and-cardboard manual games with complex rules, which required a certain amount of intelligence to read an play, and thus their acceptability was limited to the upper portion of the society (in terms of intelligence). Later, such forms as the role-playing game were developed. The role-playing game required intelligence and imagination only on the part of the "gamesmaster", a player who envisioned and designed a world in which the other players had "characters" who represented individuals in that world. Aside from the gamesmaster, no such standard of intelligence as was necessary for conflict simulation games was required; players could play with no grasp of the rules.

In the 1980's and 1990's, LED, computer simulation, and visual technology advanced to the point whereby hundreds of TV or 3V images could be transmitted along a single cable. This, combined with wallpaper-thin flat LED screens allowed people to cover entire rooms or apartments with cheap, programmable screens on which any image could be displayed.

Research into the nature of the brain and of sensory perception shortly brought about a revolution in visual and sensory technology. By 2010, it was possible to directly stimulate all five human senses; thus, a story or simulation could be experienced as if it were reality. It was, quite literally, impossible to distinguish (except by internal logic, such as bad plotting) reality from simulation. At the same time, revolutionary advances in computer animation and graphics allowed the construction of sensory images without the intermediary of actors or film.

Along with the development of increasingly cheap computer and visual technology, simulation developed. At first, paper-and-cardboard simulations were simply transferred to computer simulations, and computer simulations relying on the mails and complex rules were developed. As time went on, more and more, the complexities of the games could be handled by computer analysis and bookkeeping; the demands made on the players, in terms of imagination, intelligence, and time, constantly diminished. Cheap visual technolgy made intricate and realistic displays possible. 3V's became displays for simulations, as well as displays for broadcasted stories.

Eventually, total sensory stimulation allowed players in a simulation to participate as characters in seemingly-real experiences. Some simulations were "solitaire"; they were "part missing" simulations, in which the "player" took

one part and played, reacting and causing reactions in the other computer-controlled parts. Some were multi-player, in which many or all of the parts were taken by various players. Some were realistic simulations; some were more abstract, in which a player might take the part of a nation or group, rather than an individual.

But who wishes to live as a minor, unimportant person, when he can live as a great hero, the leader of millions? With increasing automatization, work became necessary for a few only. This trend began in the 1970's, when it became evident that there would always be a hard-core of unemployables, not from any lack of skills among that group, but simply because of a lack of jobs. It became necessary to pacify the growing, dissatisfied unemployed group with a plethora of bread and circuses. With a stabilized population and the bounty of the Midwest, bread was not a problem. With total simulation, neither were circuses.

With an increasingly illiterate, increasingly stupid, increasingly decadent population, it became difficult to find properly trained and educated personnel to carry on the necessary functions of society. In a highly automated society, a vast array of technicians and engineers was necessary to keep the cogs moving; in a highly centralized welfare state, a vast army of bureaucrats and government employees was necessary to distribute largess.

The energy crisis had been solved by fusion; cheap, clean energy also helped to diminish much of the problem of pollution produced by a world which was continually striving for—and in many countries, reaching—American standards of living, was still dangerous. Further, natural resources continued to diminish.

It was simply a matter of time; would society collapse through ecocatastrophe, resource exhaustion, lack of trained personnel—or, the oldest danger, nuclear war.

Among the restricted circles of the intellectuals, the names of Charles Roberts, James Dunnigan, and E. Gary Gygax were Antichrist.

B. DENNIS SUSTARE

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The Design and Solution of Puzzles

Rogor opened his late navigator's sea chest and once more examined the mysterious items stored within. Here was the little metal flask containing the lemony-smelling liquid; there the wooden box holding a light metal ball, a stone bowl, and a stoppered stone bottle filled with the strange molten metal that was cool to the touch. Rogor carefully unwrapped the soft cloth that protected the device of crystal and brass that Goldeneye had called an astrolabe. The muscular sea-captain tenderly lifted the instrument from its wooden cradle and wondered at its usage. He suspected it had a connection with the secret of the Navigators' Guild called "stars," the bearing lights that navigators could somehow see in the night sky. Unless, of course, this was another of the myths spread by the Guild to confuse the uninitiated. Rogor himself had never seen a "star"; the heavens at night gave off a faint, even glow in which no individual lights could be discerned. The captain once more cursed the fate that had taken his navigator, Mikel Goldeneye, just when he needed to leave those familiar waters he had sailed throughout his life. Even without a navigator, Rogor would have to set sail with the tide, or his enemies would overtake him.

There are many ways for a Gamemaster to run a fantasy role-playing game. My first castle was an immense creation, as I became carried away with the laying-out of floor plans. I had no notion as to how to provide occupants for so many rooms, and accordingly I relied on random allotment of monsters and treasure, based on the tables appearing in the original rules of *Dungeons and Dragons.* When my players explored this large, randommized castle, each game seemed to provide the same type of adventure, in which the party slew monsters, loaded themselves with gold, silver, and magical items, and returned to town to heal for next week's outing.

I noticed an oddity about these games. It occasionally had happened that my castle design had included rooms of unusual design: temples, throne rooms, chambers with intricate traps. I tended to plan the inhabitants of these rooms more carefully, without using random rolls on the tables in the rules. Interestingly

enough, these "feature rooms" provided most of the excitement in the games, while play in the ordinary 20 x 30's became almost rote in nature ("We'll throw Sleep on the orcs, slit their throats, load their silver in our packs, and go through the door on the right.") When I played in other GM's castles, I also found most enjoyment in the oddities we ran across. (There simply *must* be a reason that this statue of a dwarf is facing directly in the corner; if I could only figure it out . . .) I decided to design a couple of small towers, churches, and caves, that each contained so few rooms and chambers that I could customize and populate each one individually. I found this approach to be quite successful and satisfying.

For the third time since leaving port, Rogor poured the liquid metal into the stone bowl and floated the metal ball on the fluid. As before, the ball stayed on one side of the bowl, back towards the stern, even if he prodded it to the other side of the bowl with his finger. Did this device always point the same direction? If so, he could immediately see how useful it would be to a mariner. He poured the liquid back into its bottle and replaced the bowl, before taking out the astrolabe for examination.

As he locked the brass legs into place on the wooden base, Rogor noticed for the first time the thin grooves cut into the device. They made him think of the package of waxy sheets in Mikel's seachest. Rogor removed one sheet from the folder, and tentatively lined it up with the grooves. He was pleased to find that the sheet easily slid into place, underneath the crystal of the astrolabe. He peered at the sheet, but saw nothing of note in the faint night sky-glow. The broad-shouldered captain had heard of secret inks that had to be treated to become visible; perhaps the lemony fluid was involved. He looked through the items in the seachest until he found the small flask. It was too dark here in the open, so Rogor removed the sheet from the astrolabe and shifted under the canvas covering that served him as a "cabin" on the ship. He lit a candle and placed the waxy paper on the deck, but before he could unstopper the flask, he was astonished to see numerous small dark spots on the sheet that had not been there several minutes ago. This must have happened when it was placed in the astrolabe. Could these specks be the mysterious "stars"? Rogor pulled back the canvas flap to stare at the featureless night sky for many heartbeats, then slowly replaced the astrolabe in its wrapping.

A difficulty with having a massive castle, even if I custom-design each room, is that I can never second-guess players. They always find unanticipated ways of passing obstacles or escaping traps. They can overlook the obvious for years and stumble upon a deeply-concealed secret through some impossible sequence of unbelievable coincidences. The point with respect to castle design is that I might put great effort into a terrific room that no one ever enters. Subtle channeling of the players occasionally works, though Gamemasters who are overtly coercive are monsters to be fled (or dispatched?).

Part of the same problem is the matching of hazards to the strength of an adventuring party. Any GM should help keep low-level adventurers from attacking the dragon's lair before they're ready; at the same time, you don't want Rune Lords casually sweeping through a newly populated ground floor, cleaning out trollkin or kobolds without batting an eye. One rather indirect way of avoiding the latter is having experience be reduced if adventurers are at too safe a level for themselves, but second-generation RP increasingly removes the experience record-keeping burden from the back of the GM, thus not allowing this procedure.

Having smaller play-sites (towers, temples, tombs . . .), along with known rumors regarding the hazards thereunto, can help to match the adventurers' abilities to the dangers confronting them. Another aid is the shifting of the play of the game away from monster-slaying and towards puzle-solving. If the main difficulty in acquiring a treasure is figuring out *how* to find it, or how to recognize it you've found it, or how to make use of it once you've acquired it, rather than how to kill the guardian of the treasure, then you are basing the game primarily on the ingenuity of the players. There will still be a ranking of obstacles, for certain high-level abilities may be needed that are possessed only by "advanced" characters, but mis-matching of abilities is now more likely to result in temporary

frustration rather than instant death. This is not to say that combat will never occur, just that it no longer is the sole *raison d'etre* of the RP game.

Rogor retrieved his shield from Blinda Kermsdatr, now that she had repaired the damage done in the recent conflict. His crew had fared well against the Romulan attack, though he could ill afford the loss of four crewmen. The Captain hung the shield on the hook beside his bedding, and sat heavily on the seachest nearby. The ship badly needed water; they must make landfall soon or become even more threatened than they already were. Rogor decided to obtain another astrolabe projection, to continue his investigations. He now found it quick and easy to set up the device and place a sheet under it, to record the position of "stars" in the heavens. He was readily able to distinguish between "fixed stars," those that always kept their positions on the projection, and "wanderers," those that shifted with the advance of the ship over the sea. Rogor's blind flight from his pursuers had happened to take him in a direction that brought the position of one wanderer closer and closer to the center of the projection. It was almost as though the Goddess were leading him in that direction. The new projection showed this wanderer to now be almost exactly in the center. Rogor wondered about the meaning of this as he replaced the astrolabe.

He then took out the stone bowl with its curious liquid; the "compass," as Karl had said his father called it. Rogor had been startled on that night when the floating ball had suddenly shifted its position to another side of the bowl. Since then, Rogor had assumed that the ball might point to the closest land, though he had yet to confirm this. Nevertheless, with his need for water, he had held a course that kept the ball in the direction of the ship's bow. Yes, they were still on course; the ball maintained its position in the direction of their travel.

Just then a shout rang out from the watch, "Land ahead!" Rogor sprang to his feet and peered forward. He could just make out the silhouette of an island in the night-glow. He was right about the compass! What a useful tool it would prove to be. But he thought about the astrolabe's "wanderers"; could these points represent islands rather than stars? Well no, that couldn't be, since there was no centered wanderer on the first projection he took, soon after they had left port. This would require more thought. Rogor told Kurlon, the boatswain, to rouse the crew and prepare for a landing.

How have I incorporated puzzles into my games? Let me give a few examples. When a rabbit finds an herb (in *Bunnies and Burrows*), she must first identify it, by using her sense of smell to recognize characteristics of Location, Type, and Clarity (abilities that may improve with experience). If this identifies the herb as one known to her, she then prepares the herb (according to certain procedures) and is able to use it. If the herb is a new one, however, the rabbit can only learn its uses through experimentation, a process likely to be highly entertaining (to all but perhaps the experimenting rabbit)!

I have devised several types of magic for fantasy RP, each involving a learning process by a prospective user. These have utilized magical languages, runes. enchantment procedures, etc. As with rabbit herbalism, acquiring new magical skills often demands risky trials of hypotheses about the magical system. It is too simple to merely plunk down your silver and mysteriously have a new spell at your command. Even though there is much work for me in developing these systems, often involving a large amount of research, the development process itself is so fascinating as to be its own reward. Unfortunately, by bitter experience I have discovered that many, perhaps most, players of fantasy RP are *not* well-suited to the learning of magic in this manner. They do not take kindly to the notion of devoting a year of real time to the study of magic before their character can successfully and reliably cast

I have felt it best for the players not to know all the rules.

simple spells (ah, aren't they fortunate to live in a world of high technology!). A perfect compromise, to my mind, is found in *Runequest*, in which low-level "battle-magic" spells may be puchased at the guild by anyone with the money, while the more potent "rune-magic" and "rune-power" spells are only acquired through membership in a rune cult, after a long process of meeting the cult's prerequisites for becoming a Rune Priest.

I also utilize "scrolls" to provide puzzles for the players. I draw a map with obscure clues, or write a fragment of a document hinting at something of value, or give the solution to the passage of an obstacle, written in unknown runes that form a simple substitution cipher. These scrolls are a sideline of play, and it is not so disconcerting for (most) players to not be able to immediately interpret their meanings. Perhaps they will toy with the scrolls for a month before they crack the "code" involved. One advantage derived from scrolls is the provision of amusement for the player outside of the face-to-face meetings at the regular games. In fact, it is precisely this attribute that allows effective play-by-mail of RP games. I have been playing such a game (with Scott Robinson as GM) for more than three years now; this game concerns a quest conducted by a ship commanded by Rogor, a broad-shouldered sea-captain that prefers to fight with a large axe. . .

Rogor bellowed in pain once more. Would his eyes be burned from their sockets? What had possessed him to drop the lemony liquid into his eyes? Of course, it was the fact that the navigators he had known had all had a golden cast to their irises, and the fluid shared that golden shade. What an error for him to make! The burning had continued for at least four bells, and he was unable to see, except for the strange visions that had swum before his blurred gaze. Was he to be forever blind? Would this horrible pain never cease? Rogor heard his First Mate, Gillian, shouting at him, asking him some question again and again. The Captain was unable to understand her, or to think clearly in his agony; he uttered some words placing her in command, and gratefully allowed himself to sink into unconsciousness.

* * *

After a series of nightmares, during which time his shrieks continued to demoralize the crew, Rogor finally awoke once more. All was dark; though his pain had subsided, he now knew what he had feared was his doom, he was blind. He lay there, feeling the swells pass under the keel, hearing the creaks of rope and the hull-strakes. Then his anger burst forth, and with a roar of rage he lunged to his feet, immediately entangling himself in some sort of covering and falling heavily, with a curse, to the deck.

"Cap'n! It's all right! Here, let me get you out of that mess."

Hearing the foice of his old Quartermaster, Morthyro, Rogor sat quietly while being freed. With a start, Rogor realized when the last fabric was pulled away that he was able to see once more! He stared into Morthyro's face, with an affection so strong that his heart leapt; the joy of being able to see those ugly features was overwhelming. He could see the concern in Morthyro's stare, but Rogor just gave a mighty laugh and his long-time friend slowly relaxed into a smile. The Captain broke off his happy outburst in an instant, when he realized what else he could see. It was night, and above him in the sky was not the gentle glow he had always known, but a myriad of tiny spots of light, filling the sky with their specks of brilliance. The stars! He was right after all; the liquid gave the Navigators their ability to see the stars they used for their bearings. He saw the one star at the zenith that must be the Wanderer on the astrolabe projection. It was brighter, and burned with a bluish light. It apparently marked the position of

the small, rocky island below it, the island where they had found water and had witnessed the battle between two gods. That, then, had been one of the Holy Islands of legend. Rogor now knew how he could find the others. Gillian had now come to sit beside him; she began telling what had befallen the ship during his disablement.

I have long felt it best for the players *not* to know all the rules of the game they are playing. Even if a GM utilizes a particular set of RP rules, she or he should change the rules (characteristics of "monsters" or magical items, etc.) just to keep things interesting. An ideal set of rules should ease the GM's task of creation, but certainly not remove the creativity. It is also best for the players to appreciate what the GM must go through; this will help the games go more smoothly and avoid argument, and also give the GM that feedback of appreciation that provides the ultimate reward for all the hard work that has gone before. The best players I have known have all made attempts at being GM's themselves, even if they have not actually run many games. Such players are more imaginative (I don't know which direction cause and effect run here), and are able to reasonably attack the problems that the GM provides. They are simpathetic players thereafter, and are less likely to find fault with the GM's actions. Of course, there always are those that stand on (their!) strict interpretation of the rules. "You can't do that! It has to *touch* me to turn me to stone!" (Perhaps in *your* version of the game . . .) One of the advantages of the RP world that the *Gamemaster* (and not the rule book) creates, is that you should be able to avoid the hassles, nitpicking, and loopholes that one occasionally (?!) sees at the board game and miniatures tables. I hope my feelings do not just represent an author's bias; after all, the more GM's there are, presumably the more rule books will be sold. (Anyone who examines the royalty checks of most authors will quickly realize that our motivations are based on more than just financial return.)

If you haven't tried the puzzle-creation approach to Gamemastering a Role-Play game, if you've been locked into the random-generation trap, I would hope you might give the more creative technique a try. You needn't be an accomplished game designer or fantasy writer; most people find that they get ideas for feature rooms, traps, and special problems must faster than they can run the games to use them up. I would always choose to run my games in that manner, and to play in similar games of others; to me, the mental stimulation of puzzle-solving is much more important than mere escapism, appealing though that might be.

Now, let's see . . . How am I to interpret that map that Rogor found in the Temple of the Mahdi?

LEE GOLD

Lee is the editor of the largest Amateur Press Association (APA) magazine on RPGs. I don't know how she does it but she puts out a 160-page issue of Alarums and Excursions *every month! All for no pay. She really loves RP.*

Alarums and Excursions

It all started for me back in autumn of 1973 when the Hannifens came down to Los Angeles and taught us their newest pasttime, *Dungeons and Dragons*. We were enchanted by the game and immediately ordered a copy from TSR and soon had our own set of three booklets plus two sets of five polyhedral dice.

None of our crowd were wargamers. We were science fiction and fantasy fans, and certain nuances of the Rules didn't come through too clearly. We rolled DIO+DIO (creating a bell-shaped curve) to save vs. spells or to hit, which truly decreased a begging character's survival rate. We also considered that the Rules specified that each mage knew a limited number of spells but could throw each one as often as he wished. After all, the Rules said he *knew* the spell, didn't they?

A few months later I created my own dungeon, *Neocarn*. When the Hannifens next came down to Los Angeles, I invited them to play in it but warned them that I had on my own authority as Dungeon Master made a few changes in the Rules. In my dungeon, any being that saved against a spell once was proof against that spell for the rest of the fight.

Moreover, I had decided that you could throw spells only a limited number of times per day. Your Prime Requisite averaged with your Constitution was your number of spell points; an offensive spell cost one point, a defensive one half a point, and a non-combatant one a quarter point. (Lots of people were independently inventing spell point systems around then, and most for the same reason: the *D&D*rules didn't clearly specify enough limitations on mages' powers.)

Later in 1974, we started a weekly *D&D* game in Los Angeles among the local science fiction fans. We knew there were people at Cal Tech playing the game (or rather what they considered their own improved version of it), but we didn't interact with them much, nor with the wargamers who frequented games at the local hobby shop, nor with the UCLA students who played under Computer Club auspices. We had a small but friendly circle of play. Besides, we got nervous when mixing with people who played radically different rules variations **than we did.**

Around winter of 1974 we encountered Mark Swanson, a science fan and wargamer of LA origin who was now based in Boston and on intimate terms with the MITSGS. He taught us to roll D20 to hit or save and gave us a set of his rules for individuating small bonuses for beginning characters, the Swanson characteristics.

About this time I drew up a set of local house rules including the Swanson characteristics and my encounter tables, which incorporated the *Greyhawk* monsters and had twelve levels of monsters rather than six so as to provide a more flexible tool for dungeon stocking.This booklet also included descriptions of some popular LA-fan monsters, such as the *Typo* (which originated from a description of this monster in Walt Willis's *The enchanted Duplicator*, a piece of fan fiction). There was a fair demand for xeroxes of this fifteen page handout.

As the months passed, our group became more concerned about the different varieties of *D&D* play we had encountered: Cal Tech, San Francisco, Boston, LA. . . surely with the Rules' vagueness and fans' inventivenes, if this went on we would soon be unable to play in a non-local friend's game without succumbing to culture shock. Moreover, although*D&D* discussion was appearing in the local SF fanclub's apa (amateur press association), the increasing quantity of it was beginning to irritate non-players.

I decided it was time to Do Something to Promote Communication among *D&D*-ers and went to fannish wisdom for the answer: an apa, a magazine to which anyone might contribute and of which all contributors would get copies. I made two changes in the traditional apa structure: I provided room for non-contributor subscribers, and I provided editorial ability to type up fanzines whose writers were unwilling or unable to type on mimeograph stencil. I also decided that since it was unclear to what size the apa would grow that the best way to price it would be for so much plus postage, thus allowing people to opt for book rate, UPS or first class. (This proved useful in preserving our low price image as years went by and postal rates zoomed.)

The first issue of *Alarums and Excursions* came off our hand-cranked Gestetner 120 mimeo graph in June of 1975. It had thirty pages, and one of the prime draws was the Swanson characteristics. We printed sixty copies.

Nowadays (October, 1978) *A&E #39 is* being printed on our electric Gestetner 360 mimeograph. It has 160 pages (my maximum allowable for an issue). We

print 720 copies—and send them not only throughout the US but to Canada, Britain, Australia, Europe and to numerous APO/FPO addresses. And *A&E* 1-19 are now available to latecomers in reprint editions.

Nor is our discussion apa still focused only on *D&D*. Nowadays contributors talk about such other FRP games as *Chivalry & Sorcery* and *Runequest*—and such SFRP games as *Traveller* and *Space Quest*. It's an international polyphonic cacophony, sometimes confusing to the newcomer, but of interest and use to the reader able to winnow the babble for what he wishes to adapt to his own game.

Despite this broadening of subscriber base and of contributor interest, over its three years *Alarums and Excursions'* format has changed only slightly from the way it was set up at its birth. We now regularly run a listing of other FRP magazines, chiefly those I receive in trade—in order to pass on the benefits of those trades to the subscribers. I have also been forced by ever growing numbers of contributors to establish a maximum contribution of 16 pages (six pages for fiction). (These are fan-style pages, single-spaced, with about 500 words per page.) Due to a desire to keep down postage costs and minimize the labor of stapling, I have also made 160 pages (including a cover and four pages of editorial matter) the maximum for a single issue. This keeps us comfortably at about 14½ ounces.

I've had three *D&D* settings in my career as a DM: two dungeons and a city. The first Dungeon was *Neocarn*, done about two months after discovering *D&D* so the local players would have some place to run. It was based about three days safe journey (no need for a wilderness run) from a small frontier village complete with a pioneering Patriarch able to do Raises if properly motivated (by money and good deeds).

Neocarn was set up by the original *D&D* rules though with a somewhat more varied cast of monsters, particularly wanderers. My encounter rules for these specified 10% miscellaneous (i.e. not in the rulebooks and usually not to be fought, merely encountered); in practice this meant chiefly pushcart peddlers selling items of varied efficacy and excellence.

Most monsters were run-of-the-rules menaces, but a few had names and reputations, notably one Fylfot, an Evil High Priest whose lair spanned the central section of the first three floors. There were few standard traps as such (no pits nor crossbow bolt firing panels) but an occasional one-way door or two did exist, as did a lying sign. There were also occasional monsters far too powerful for the level they were on, but incapable of leaving their rooms even to attack an adventurer staring at them in the doorway. Only the incautious traveler who dared enter the room, knowing them there, was in danger. It was my belief that any dungeon level should have something on it of terror for even the hardiest explorer suited to that level.

As the level of character I encountered as DM began going up, I tried my hand at a Chaotic City, roughing in two sections: a slum containing characters of 1st-10th level and a suburban housing area, nicely maintained, containing characters of 10th-15th level. I found that my City of *Nyosa* was somewhat above my own level to play properly and have put it away until my own characters (the highest still only at 8th level) will teach me how to play such characters properly.

My final and still running dungeon of *Alf* was a reaction to the growing player familiarity with the rules, which by then included not only the original *D&D* but also *Greyhawk* and *Blackmoor*. *Alf* was designed partly as a work-saving dungeon. By placing it in caverns legendarily "measureless to man" I obviated the need for giving players detailed mapping information. By ruling that the first floor was a second level, the second floor a fourth level, and the third floor an eighth level I also made stocking a varied set of floors easier while still providing an adequate spectrum of challenges for the explorers.

it was time to Do Something to Promote Communication

My final step with *Alf* was to rule that one and only one group of a given species was allowed in the entire dungeon at a time. Thus one and only one group of standard skeletons exists, etc. Since *Alf* has about 100 populated rooms on each of the first two floors and 25 populated rooms on the third floor, this obviously led to the need to have most monsters individual and unique, which did away with one of my pet peeves: players frantically flipping through the rules to find out the vulnerabilities and strong points of the newest monster encountered. Instead I found players' eyes once more filled with wonder as they attempted to diagnose and deal with such aberrant monsters as phase skeletons and bonsai ents.

Like *Neocarn*, *Alf* has few standard traps/tricks, though ample temptations for the unwary character to investigate things at his own risk. Neither dungeon features technology nor permits much of it for either player or NPC. My own version of technologists was Mad Scientists, beings whose activities unfathomably interfered with the operation of magic—*and* vice versa, something akin to the operation of a Holy Sword. A few of these are still left but not many. Most Mad Scientists have pet Typos, beings whose operation interferes with the proper course of spelling.

Both dungeons also run on my own spell point system. Since I consider it incompatible with spell points, *permanent* is not allowable as a spell. Nor by local fiat is Wish a possible spell, though artifact wishes are still operant. Other non-permitted spells are Strength, Dexterity and anything else which affects characters' characteristics for the course of the expedition.

Alf is set up for an average party armor class of AC1 for fighters, AC6 for mages. Anything higher operates to increase all monsters' hit bonuses. Similarly belts of Giant or Golem Strength/Powers tend by local Rules of Fairness to evoke a Giant or Golem to fight.

Aside from that both dungeons still operate pretty much according to standard *D&D* with *Greyhawk* spells, hit dice, and weapon damage, but not weapon/armor modifications.

For myself, I now play regularly only once a month or so. Right now I'm involved as a co-Dm along with my husband (and Chief Printer) Barry of a newly started *C&S* campaign. I still keep my two Variant *D&D* Dungeons available for play at conventions such as *Boskone, Orccon, GLASC, Pacific Encounters* and the numerous SF fan conventions which have a lot of informally organized FRP gaming. And I still rank FRP games as one of the more enjoyable forms of live entertainment.

ED SIMBALIST

Ed is considered the scholar of FRP games. His output is prolific but very authoritative. He has no equal in providing pure information specifically for use in RPGs.

Fantasy Role Playing

Since its inception, fantasy role-playing (FRP) has evolved far beyond the expectations of those who formulated the first sets of FRP rules or of those players who first ventured into "dungeons" and "wildernesses" to face the Unknown. FRP has become *more* than a mere game. It is an activity approaching the proportions of a cult. It is a means of personal expression on a highly creative and imaginaive level. It is the spontaneous creation of a "living novel" or a "psychodrama," interaction amongst players on many different levels as they create *alter egos* in the persons of their characters and so enter into imaginative and exciting realms of existence denied to

them in their everyday lives. The more fully they themselves capture the spirit of their characters and imbue them with rounded personalities, backgrounds, and motivations separate from their own, the more the players become "actors" on a stage of their own making.

To repeat, FRP is not "just a game." The rules of FRP are regarded in a manner unlike that accorded to the rules of any other game. Indeed, FRP rules are merely the language through which players and Game Masters communicate and simulate those elements of what might be termed "imaginative reality." To play FRP is to engage in the creation of a group fantasy, to produce the Grand Illusion of a world ethos by the deliberate suspension of one's disbelief. Thus it is that twentieth century people can, for a few hours, escape into a fictitious world and accept the "reality" of that world for the sake of pure enjoyment.

The illusion of reality is essential to any entry into a world of fantasy. One might say that a "Spell" is cast and consciously submitted to by the participants. "Come into my world," is an invitation extended by the Game Master, the director of this group artform, and he employs the "rules" to delineate the outlines of the world he has conceived and account for many activities which would or could occur in it. The rules merely aid the Game Master to maintain the internal consistency, the "laws" by which his world operates.

But even as the Game Master spins his web of illusion, the players themselves add to the performance by playing their roles. Many are the times when the Game Master finds that his creation has taken on a life and purpose of its own as he responds to the creative output of the players. The story-telling—for FRP in a very real way is a story-telling activity—becomes a group creation as the imaginary life experiences and actions of each player/character are added to the basic concept provided by the Game Master. The *experience* is itself the thing, and once begun it becomes a group happening!

As we designed and tested *Chivalry & Sorcery*, it became clear that the illusion of reality had to be maintained to bring out the finest in creative impulses from both the players and the Game Master. Thus we aimed at creating the feeling of *being* in a world, of competing in and even just surviving the physical and social "realities" of an existence different from our own. We chose the feudal model as the basis of that imaginary world because feudalism is a fairly universal cultural pattern encountered in not only Medieval Europe but in many works of fantasy fiction and traditional legend.

Indeed, the biggest illusion we succeeded in creating with the rules is the belief of many commentators and players that *Chivalry & Sorcery* is realistic! The "realism" of *C&S* is the *totally imaginary* High Chivalry of *King Arthur* and *The Faerie Queene*, of *Ivanhoe* and *Men of Iron* and *The White Company*. Elements of classical, medieval, Nordic and Celtic myth were mixed in for seasoning, with liberal doses of Tolkein and the Dracula/-Frankenstein/Dr. Jeykell and Mr. Hyde horror story and movie tradition thrown in for good measure. Our magical systems were patterned uon, but never imitated, a dozen traditions found in various times and in various cultures. Of course, elements of hard military and economic history underlie many of the systems, as do insights into social organization, but these are tempered by a sense of romantic heroism and derring-do. In short, *Chivalry & Sorcery* systems may *appear* to simulate reality, but the *realism* itself is purely in the *minds* of the players!

It is gratifying that this sense of realism has made an impact, but I would like to point out that the thrust of *Chivalry & Sorcery* was never directed toward presenting hard reality for its own sake. Rather, we felt that establishing a foundation for a fantasy campaign which has its systems rooted in the real world, even the wildest fantasies can be sustained. Everyday, mundane considerations take care of themselves that way, with reduced reminders that "such-and-such" situation "wouldn't really happen that way" to interfere with the fantasy illusion that the players and Game Masters are trying to create. As Tolkein and many other commentators on the subject have noted, *all fantasy is founded upon our perception of reality*. The trick is not to let the fantasy be entirely bounded and controlled by hard reality, merely informed and guided by it.

In examining the brief but eventful history of FRP, one cannot help but notice the continual modification of the "rules."

From the moment that FRP began, Game Masters started to alter and improve and add to the existing rules. Variants sprang up in profusion, despite calls for "One True Way" of FRP gaming. This design creativity on the part of players is their inevitable and necessary response to their particular needs. *Any set of FRP rules has, as a primary task, the sustaining of the particular fantasy world the players are attempting to establish.* It is unthinkable that there could be any set of rules that would answer all the needs of all players everywhere to create any fantasy world that might be conceived! Moreover, it is likely that one of the main appeals of FRP is the freedom of players to put their own personal touches into the activity. From the Game Master's point of view, it is fun to develop his *own* world, to design or alter rules in order to simulate the conditions and effects *he* desires. It is fun to see others enjoying the results of that creative talent. In fact, it is the biggest "high" a Game Master can know.

That is the reason that I encourage layers to "meddle" with the rules I design. An unrepentant meddler myself, I like to play with the systems. It not only gives me some feeling of pride in my creations, but it is absolutely necesary if I am going to adapt the rules so that they sustain my world. "Come into my world, and welcome," but first I have to be sure that the world will remain consistent, that it will function the way I want it to function. Every Game Master faces the same problem. Is there any wonder that variant systems appear?

In talking to Greg Stafford, for example, I discovered that he employed many *Chivalry & Sorcery* systems to set up his *Dragon Pass* world for FRP. I also borrow from his systems, and those of other games as well. So should it be, for the idea of a "pure" FRP campaign ignores the needs of individual Game Masters. One uses *anything* that does the job, and one never fears to modify a promising system or concept to fit his world. The *only* criterion governing such modifications and adoptions of systems is that they *work*! If they produce the results desired, well and fine. Who cares who designed the systems of what publisher produced them?

FRP is an individual activity expressing the needs and expectations of those engaged in the activity. One is limited only by his imagination and his design ability.

Knowing the investment of time and imaginative energy that is required to design an FRP world, and fully aware of the infinite potentials for enjoyment and creativity that are available to the role player who willingly accepts the "reality" of an FRP world, I sometimes become impatient with players who insist on being their usual twentieth century selves and refuse to live in the fantasy as their characters. Perhaps I am insulted as the Game Master/story-teller/director of the activity, but it grates to see all that work and all that potential ignored as some player tries to win the game in the same manner as he would approach a game based upon the "adversary" model. One simply cannot "win" a role playing game because ther are no "victory conditions" as in, for example, a board game simulation of the Battle of Kursk. The "game" is the Game of Life, with each character choosing his own "victory conditions," and success is not simply a matter of counting bodies or gold or experience points.

Chivalry & Sorcery reflects that philosophy. What is the aim of FRP as embodied in *C&S*? Be a Lord. Aspire to power and position. Rule a kingdom or barony or barbarian tribe. Make war. Conquer Empires. If you are a commoner, seek the golden spurs of Knighthood—or maybe even just freeman status if you are a serf or slave. Gain respect and reputation by performing deeds of valour. Seek gold. Become a Merchant Prince. Become an explorer or freebooter or the best darn pickpocket in the nation. Do good. Do evil. Avenge an ancient wrong against one's family. Regain a lost throne. Marry a princess. Protect the weak. Oppress others. Escape the consequences of your acts by cunning and deceit and plain bribery and corruption of public officials. Be a Robin Hood. Smite the Godless. Take holy orders. Go crusading. Make a pact with the Devil. Seek universal knowledge. Unlock forbidden secrets. Know yourself!

The "game" is the Game of Life.

Above all, survive and conduct yourself in the sure knowledge that a victory marks only one skirmish amongst many that Life will inevitably bring to you as a character.

If one is going to create a world that is "alive" and charged with real adventure, role playing is essential. One must get *inside* his character, see what motivates him and makes him unlike any other, breathe life into him as an individual, and above all surrender one's twentieth century self to the illusion and *be* that character—see, feel, think, and act as he would. Only then will the activity be more than counting gold or bodies or experience points.

This is the consideration upon which FRP succeeds or fails. For FRP is a socializing activity, a deliberate gathering of friends to enjoy and marvel at the wit and cunning and skill we all exhibit as we contribute to our mutual enjoyment of the activity. Not to be outdone by our fellows, each of us responds to the contributions of our friends with equally fine character play, always aware of the degree of sensitivity and expertise with which the Game Master orchestrates and directs our efforts as we enfold the living drama. We are all playwrights and actors and audience rolled into one. If it is a good performance, we are highly gratified and, though limp with repeated adrenalin surges, we make plans to meet for the next foray into "Our World."

And that is what FRP is to me.

PAUL JAQUAYS

Paul is one of those lovable little characters that you'd like to have as a personal friend. His artwork has appeared in The Space Gamer *and many of the Microgames by Metagaming. Judges Guild is presently keeping him a very busy person.*

Fun . . . Heck no/ I Do This for Money!

Sounds like a pretty mercenary title doesn't it? To be honest, it actually even applies to part of what I have to say about role-playing and gaming. Then again, it may just be a neat sounding title for an article. Let's see. . . before I delve into shaggy dog stories and opinions, maybe I ought to answer that question I sense paramount in some minds, that is "Who is this character?" Good question. I've asked it of myself many times and occasionally received an answer. For starters, I am Paul Jaquays (pronounced: Jake-ways). My current function in life is that of an illustrator and in that function and also as a game designer, I am employed by the Judges Guild. However, I believe the major reason that I am included in *Different Worlds*' list of "famous gamesters" (sounds more like infamous) is that I am or was the publisher and founder of *The Dungeoneer*, a little *Dungeons and Dragons* fan magazine that had been touted as the "number one Dungeonmasters' magazine." (Let it be said right here that I did not say that. I'm still trying to figure out why it was so popular.) Outside of that, I've illustrated a couple of games and designed a few *D&D* monsters. Nothing spectacular.

However, I believe it is this predisposition towards getting my artwork published that has gotten me so deeply into the gaming business. Y'see there was this little gaming 'zine called *The Space Gamer* that had just sent my younger brother a free copy of their second issue that contained three articles that were to change my life. The first two were reviews of the new fantasy game *Dungeons and Dragons* (Andy Pudewa and Tim Waddell, thanks where ever you

are!). The third said "Sf and sf conflict art is needed for our word heavy pages. We pay up to $5 for an illustration." 'Nuff said!! I was hooked. It was not long ere *The Space Gamer* was using my work and I was working over a set of Dave A's and E. Gary's original tomes. (It might be said here that it took a year and my first convention before I discovered that we were playing the game almost entirely wrong. However again, it might also be said that we didn't care. We were having fun and that was what mattered. In fact that is what has always mattered.) Before long I had received permission from Tim Kask at TSR to publish a fan magazine entitled *The Dungeoneer*. (Sure I asked. I wasn't looking for trouble.)

Through the magazine, I tried to provide the kind of material that I, as a beginner would like to see published. (This was back before *The Dragon*.) In doing so, I managed to meet or correspond with a lot of the "major figures" in fantasy gaming at the time. However, as time went by, I found that I had to substitute working on the magazine for actual gaming time as I could not do both and maintain my responsibilities to the mundane world of studies, work and social life. Even at conventions I found my time consumed with meeting people and trying to push *The Dungeoneer*. (I did not play in a single tournament game at Origins 78.) So, over a year ago, I sold *The Dungeoneer* to Chuck Anshell, who has more than his share of woe and has been prevented from putting out more than two issues in the past year (at this writing #8 is in the mails and I think that I've written or drawn more than half of #9.).

Because of *The Dungeoneer* I've become more deeply involved with the world of gaming than I otherwise would have if I had spent more time playing and less time telling other people how to play. (Can I help it if I've got printing in my blood?) I even owe my current employment to that little magazine, considering that my contacts developed through *The Dungeoneer* were instrumental in being referred to Judges Guild.

However, after sitting back and reflecting, (when I probably should have been working on various projects or at least writing this article a little sooner than before the night I mail it.) I realized that role-playing, fantastic gaming and almost all that goes with it had been an integral part of my life (and probably of many other people) long before I stumbled onto *D&D*. It may even be plausible to state that my discovery of role-playing gaming was less a discovery than it was a rediscovery of something that I had thought lost with childhood.

When I was small (a hard concept to grasp for those who know me), I used to play army like almost every other kid, (this was before Vietnam became a vocal issue) pretending for the duration of an afternoon that I and several other friends were soldiers. Pretending was important. The perils of being killed by the enemy were real, and occasionally I died. Sure, it was just play, but in a sense it was also real. We were simulating a fantasy. We knew it wasn't relity. We knew where to draw the line that separated real life and fantasy. But the events that happened were real and the memories they left were tangible, even though in a sense, they were also not real. There were no cowards (even though some of us may have been afraid of heights) and we were all heroes. However, time passed and the heroes grew older. What had been important to young boys became immature and childish. Oh, there were still fantasies, but they were acted out in different ways. No one defended the borders or died heroically in the service of his king anymore, to live again moments later as the personna of another valiant one was taken over. I shouldn't say no one. Some still did. But then again, I was always different.

I was always different.

My favorite pasttime had always been imagining. Toy soldiers, plastic animal figurines and wooden blocks became worlds of strange civilizations and complex societies with wars, religions, economies, fantastic citadels and high adventure. There were no rules. Imagination never needed rules. Rules were for when imagination failed us. Even then, I must claim a failure of imagination; for my brother and I soon developed very simple rules for combat.

It was around this time that I came across the *Lord of the Rings*. Frodo, Gandalf and Aragorn took me to a world different from any science fiction I had ever read. Unfortunately, even then, the glistening cities of my childhood began to become just so many piles of blocks and dice rolls were always necessary to sustain the lives of vinyl heroes. It was the passing of an age. (Seems I've read that somewhere several times before.)

In high school and early college, the role-playing provided by occasional encounters with theatrical productions provided some relief from the urge to live out a sort of fantasy adventure within the boundaries of the real world. (I think there comes a time in everyone's life when he or she finally realizes that there can be no healthy physical escape from the world that confines us, but instead escape must be found within the rules that bind and constrict. Such an escape is easily found in play, acting and gaming. Each provides a getaway but still allows for a safe attachment or return to reality.) It was with great excitement that I welcomed the advent of Fantasy role-playing gaming.

In the FRP game there exists the real possibilities of becoming those heroes you pretended to be as a child, but without the physical limitations that location, health and age may have caused. The fantastic worlds and cities become realer than even the blocks and toys of childhood could have imagined because they too are freed of the physical limitations that burden all but pure imagination.

Since I see that I have become

dangerously philosophical in my ramblings (thinking is always dangerous. Warps the mind). I will interrupt this pithy broadcast to mention that in FRP gaming I have found an escape or release from day to day tensions (not quite like aspirin, but close) that has allowed me to exercise new outlets for creativity. Along the same line, my present roommate, when he was in college, found that the escape provided by a weekly session of *Dungeons and Dragons* allowed him to concentrate more fully on his studies and as such raised his grade point average. I usually found, however, that I would spend hours and hours designing dungeons and let my studies fall where they would. Such is life.

Most of the lasting friendships that I have formed have been because of FRP gaming. It may not be that FRP gaming promotes harmony and brotherly love (there have been many times when we were at each other's throats), but it is more likely that kindred (if not crazy) spirits were unavoidably brought together.

Even my job, that of a game designer (make that: designer of simulated adventure game aids for use within the strictures of *D&D*), illustrator and sometime commercial artist, was probably inevitable, considering that I was unemployed at the time and picky about the kind of work I wanted to do. Although, I'm fairly certain that I could tolerate 40+ hours a week at my drawing board, the other half of the job would get pretty trying if it was all I had to do. If one has ever done two or three weeks of nothing but research, then one might understand where I'm coming from. I'd say it beats working, and I would also be the first to admit that it is very hard work. But it is emjoyable. So is trying to explain what I do to someone who has never heard of fantasy role-playing games, let alone come across someone who works on them.

At the risk of becoming pithy again, I would like to state that the medium of role-playing gaming is a good way to discover the values that a person may hold in the "real world." Many people literally become different persons when playing an FRP game. It may be that they are playing a different character than their normal personality, but then again, it is possible that the person who is hiding behind the "masks" of convention and acceptibility is unconsciously coming forward. If you really want to get to know someone, play a role-playing game with them, but don't let them know that you know they are letting down their walls. Fun?. . . Heck No! I do this for money!

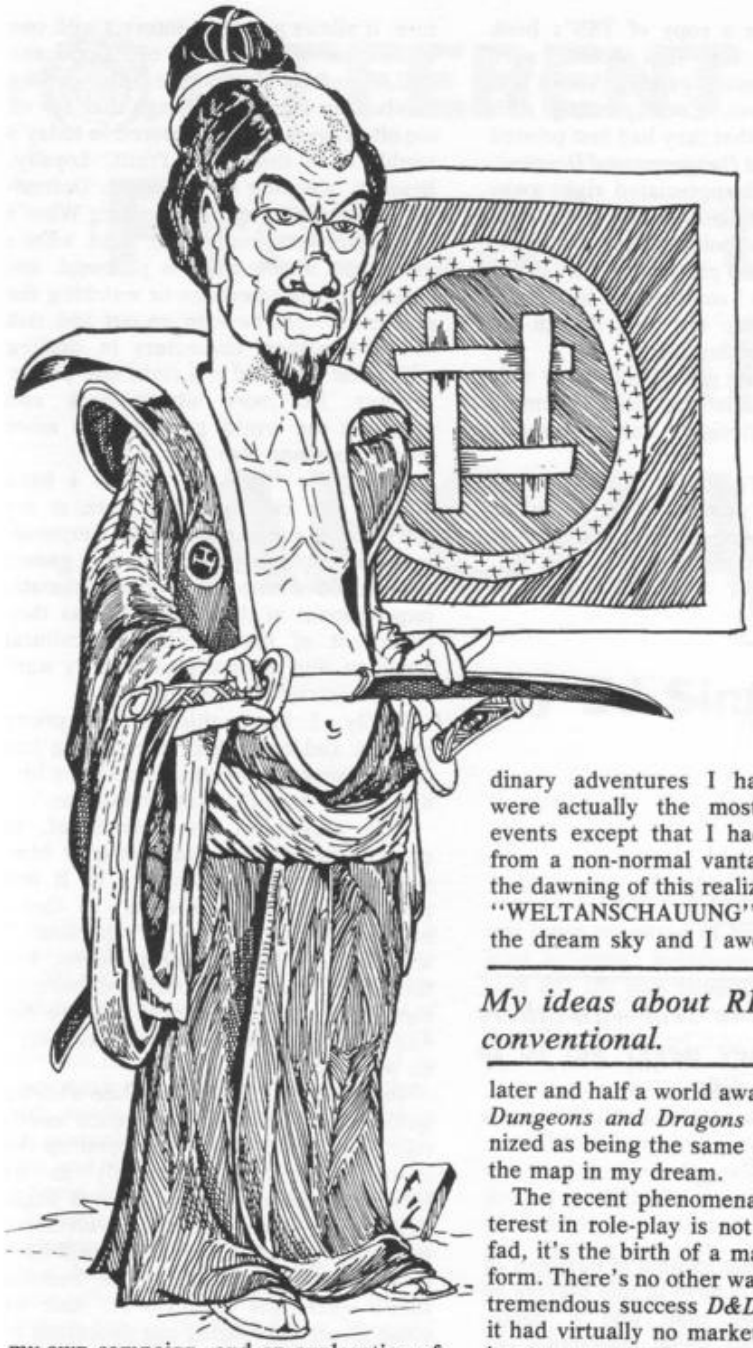
STEPHEN L. LORTZ

I've seen the drafts to Archive Miniature's Star Rovers *which Steve helped with the initial design. It looked very impressive and there are many who can't wait for its publication.*

My Life and RPGs

Issue #5 of *Future* magazine posed the following question to a number of science fiction celebrities, "What will the next important breakthrough in the entertainment media be?" Nearly all of the replies involved a mere extension of current motion picture and television technology. Only one answers, from Larry Niven, included the concept of role-play, and all he could foresee was a passive form in which a machine feeds sensations directly to the participant's memory. None of these luminaires were aware of the fact that the next important breakthrough in entertainment was made several years ago, when adult recreational role-playing games were invented. There has been a lot of noise in the gaming hobby recently, regarding future development of RPGs, and I intend to contribute my two-cents' worth in this article.

First, let me introduce myself. I am a twenty-nine-year-old male, born and bred in Indiana. I spent three years at Anderson College as an Art Major and six years in the Navy, where I qualified as Engineroom Supervisor aboard the nuclear submarine *U.S.S. Pogy*. I took up gaming as an alternative to the lifestyle of a jolly jack-tar, and after receiving my discharge, migrated to San Francisco. There I spent a year sculpting figures for Archive Miniatures. I made my written debut in the gaming world with the publication of *Perilous Encounters*, a set of fantasy miniatures rules available from the CHAOSIUM, and subsequently worked with Nevile Stocken on Archive's *Star Rovers*. I'm currently involved in a variety of projects including a set of miniatures rules for the Elric saga called *Proud Prince of Ruins*, a novelization of



my own campaign, and an exploration of the abstract structure of role-playing games.

My ideas about RPGs are not conventional. Early in 1970, I dreamt I was marooned on an alien planet as a result of military operations in space. The surface of the world was linear instead of two-dimensional and, while wandering along it, I underwent the most bizarre series of adventures I've ever experienced. Towards the end of the dream, as a local inhabitant was showing me a map of her world, a remarkable thing happened. The map wasn't what you and I ordinarily think a map should be . . . a two-dimensional projection showing spatial relations . . . it was a collection of charts and graphs portraying experience. As I studied them, I realized that the extraordinary adventures I had encountered were actually the most commonplace events except that I had viewed them from a non-normal vantage point. With the dawning of this realization, the word "WELTANSCHAUUNG" flashed across the dream sky and I awoke. Five years later and half a world away, I first played *Dungeons and Dragons* which I recognized as being the same sort of thing as the map in my dream.

My ideas about RPGs are not conventional.

The recent phenomenal growth of interest in role-play is not just a passing fad, it's the birth of a major popular art form. There's no other way to explain the tremendous success *D&D* enjoyed when it had virtually no marketing. Role-playing games are uniquely suited to perform a number of functions which are becoming increasingly important in our peculiar period of history, and this suitability guarantees that RPGs will continue to be relished in their present forms, and give rise to new pastimes which haven't even been imagined yet/

What do people *do* in life, other than play roles? We are the people we *are,* because we selected roles when we were children. We know how to behave in most situations because we practiced playing our roles in childhood games. We recognize each other through the insignia of our roles and like or dislike others depending on whether or not their roles are compatible with our own. What more appropriate form of entertainment is there, than a role-playing game?

When the rate of cultural change is relatively slow, as it was until the first part of this century, the roles people assume are servicable throughout those people's lives. However, when culture is in a state of flux as our own is now, the role a person chooses in childhood can be rendered obsolete several times over in the span of an individual life. Apart from the fact that RPGs can be just plain *fun*, they can help us survive in our shifting cultural environment by restoring our childish ability to vary the number of roles we can play in "real" life, and by allowing us to explore the nature of that "reality" through engaging in fantasy. RPGs can perform an invaluable service by preparing us to face the unexpected with equanimity and to search for truth in spite of manifest meaninglessness.

Go read *Life After Life* and *Reflections on Life After Life* by Dr. Raymond A. Moody. It just might be that Life itself is the grandest RPG of them all!

DAVID A. HARGRAVE

Dave is a large man who published the Arduin Grimoire, *now in three volumes. He has a store called the Multiversal Trading Co. in Concord, California. It is a game store that deals mainly with RPGs, he'll be glad to give visitors any help they may need with their dungeons.*

Role Playing Games, Fantasy and Otherwise

The concept of role playing entered my life in 1968 as I attended the Military Intelligence School at Fort Holabird Maryland as a neophyte Counter Intelligence agent. We were taught to play hundreds of different roles, and to be able to adapt to any situation as circumstances demanded. Professional actors were utilized to teach us our "craft," and the entire concept intrigued me as I had been an inveterate board gamer for some ten years at this point, and the idea of adapting "real life" role playing to gaming fired my imagination. However, being assigned to the far east effectively stopped any chance I would have to experiment in the area for some two years.

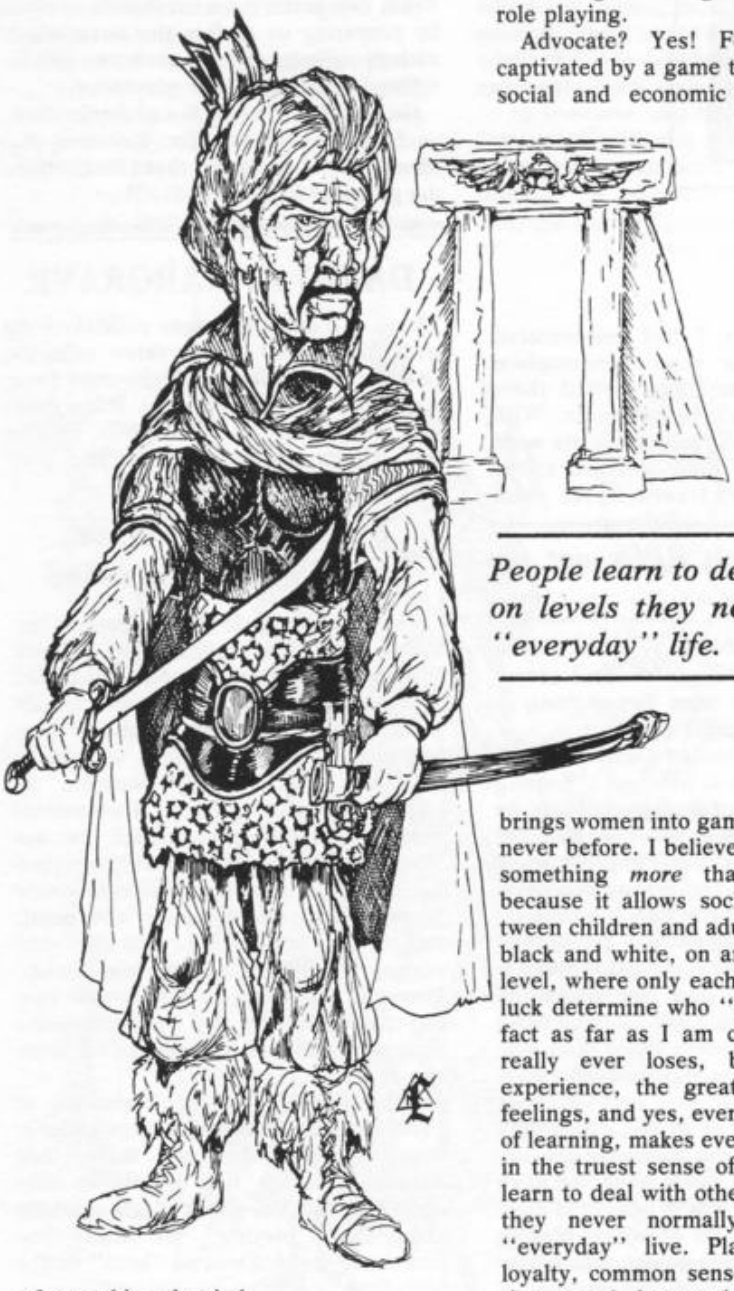
Coming home during Christmas of 1970, I eagerly looked forward to gaming, wenching, partying and seeing old friends (although not exactly in that order). I had not done much thinking about "role playing" for nearly two years, and the idea was on "hold" until a later time.

I became involved in the old Spartan International gaming group, and was heavily into 1:1200 scale naval battles and *Air Aces* miniature dogfighs, when I was invited into something called *Panorama*

Games. It was essentially a play by mail game where each player ran a country or empire *in its totality*. The battles that insued were gamed out by various club chapters around the country.

When that club folded, I switched over to International Gamers Association (where I am a lifetime member today) and continued in the fascinating pursuit of *Panorama* type games; eventually being involved in as many as six at one time.

Something bothered me though, an intellectual itch as it were, and I began to tinker around with role playing rules based on Conan's *Hyborian Age* as a way of scratching that itch.



During that time I also began to play miniature ancient battles with my own rules, but stopped to devote my full time to devising a role playing game of *Magik and Mystery*.

I came across a copy of TSR's book *Chainmail* and saw that others were interested in fantasy gaming/Sword and Sorcery as I was. Corresponding with them I was told that they had just printed something called *Dungeons and Dragons*. I sent for it and appreciated right away the brilliant *idea* behind the game, but was sorely dissappointed with the actual rules, systems and playability/readability of the game. So I commenced in earnest to come up with my own design for Fantasy Role Playing rules.

Throughout the years, and three very successful books later, I have become a full time game designer and advocate of role playing.

Advocate? Yes! For I have been captivated by a game that cuts across all social and economic lines, and even brings women into gaming in numbers as never before. I believe in role playing as something *more* than just a game, because it allows social interaction between children and adults, rich and poor, black and white, on an *absolutely equal* level, where only each players' skill and luck determine who "wins" or loses. In fact as far as I am concerned, no one really ever loses, because the rich experience, the great amount of good feelings, and yes, even the great amount of learning, makes every player a winner in the truest sense of the word. People learn to deal with other people on levels they never normally get to try in "everyday" live. Players learn about loyalty, common sense, mythology, tactics, greed, love and death and much, much more in every game.

People learn to deal with others on levels they never get to in "everyday" life.

At the risk of sounding corny, I will go further and say that I feel that Role Playing fulfills a niche in society that is no longer fillable in today's societal structure. It allows people to interact with one another on a basic level of "Good and Evil," and draws people into getting involved in ideas and things that are all too often overlooked or ignored in today's world. Such things as Truth, Loyalty, Bravery, Keeping One's Word, Defending What's Good and Confronting What's Evil, all of this and more. And what's more, the involvement is *personal*, not vicarious as in television or watching the movies. People have to go out and risk *themselves*/their characters in dealing with what they feel is a right and proper manner. No more sitting back and watching the world pass by, no more letting someone else do it.

On a less "preachy" level, I have noticed that kids who play here at my store have substantial grade improvements after playing in role playing games for a period of time. I also notice dramatic improvement in their social life as they come out of their restrictive cultural bindings, and learn to *be* what they want to be, unafraid and proud.

Really, I know this sounds pretty preachy and corny, but role playing has had just such a dramatic effect on my life, and on the lives of many around me.

Role playing is the essence of, to paraphrase old Doc Frankenfurter himself, Being it, not Dreaming it. It lets people *do it for themselves*, as themselves. Sure, they play a "character," sometimes even non-human ones, but they are still playing *themselves* because that character is *what they want to be*, and is not some abstract "unit counter" on some game board.

To sum up; I think that Role Playing games are just what the genre needs right now. I feel that it will open up the entire game field eventually as its influence spreads, and as players begin demanding more personal involvement from their games. The industry will have to accommodate the customers, because that's where the money's at. And we come closer to realizing our potentials as gamers and as people.

DIFFERENT WORLDS

Presents the World of ARCHAERON

by Ed Simbalist

Where does one begin to describe a world with a designed area of more than 10,000,000 square miles, containing several dozen nations and some thousands of towns, cities, manors, and castles, with cultures ranging from Neo-Classical to Dark Ages and High Chivalric feudalism, with purely Barbarian societies mixed in for seasoning? Such a world is Archaeron, and it never stops growing.

Some thousand years ago, the world was largely united under the tyrannical rule of the Dragon Kings, who possessed great Magicks and many Firedrakes to ensure their dominion. However, led by Oberon, Lord of the High Elves, Thorvald Iron Shield, King of the Dwarves, and many lesser lords of the race of Men, the oppressed subject races rose up to cast down their masters. Outnumbered thousands to one, the hard-pressed Dragon Lords augmented the strength of their Dragon steeds with legions of monstrous Goblinoids and Trolls which they bred in their foul laboratories. However, their powers had grown less over the many centuries of their rule, and their power was broken. Driven to a final refuge on the Dragon Isles in the middle of the Western Sea, the remaining Dragon Lords managed to survive but so few were the numbers of this long-lived but slow-breeding race that they could not hope to recover their lost power for many generations. The terrible war fractured the fabric of civilization, with the Empire collapsing into a number of tiny nations and large expanses of barbarous wilderland between. Relations between mankind and the less numerous races of the Elves and Dwarves became strained, and the Elves retreated into the woodlands, the Dwarves into the mountains. Where men were able to maintain some elements of the former Empire, fairly civilized nations emerged (neo-Classical, on the Ancient Egyptian, Greek, or Roman model). Others were reduced to pure barbarism (Steppe Nomads, Nordics, Celtics) or feudalism (basic *Chivalry & Sorcery* pattern). In the regions most dominated by men, the monsters were decimated but beyond these regions in the vast wilderlands they remained in considerable numbers.

I manage the feudal states and the steppe barbarians. This region consists of 9 feudal nations located along the shores and slightly inland of the Western Sea which separates the two principal continents currently known in the world. To the east are expanses of forested wilderness, mountains, and, in the southwest, desert. Beyond that is the vast grassy steppeland of the "Horse Peoples."

To set up these regions, I employed the economic/military/social systems contained in *Chivalry & Sorcery*, the *Sourcebook, Swords&Sorcerers,* and *Bireme & Galley*. To speed up the design of such an extensive region, I evolved an "instant" feudal holdings system (in *Swords & Sorcerers*), while economics systems were developed (in the *Sourcebook*) to give a more detailed picture of the resources available to both nations and individual characters. When determining the locations of castles, towns, etc., I took into account the effects of the presence of rivers, overland trade routes, and natural terrain when deciding upon the size or strength of a particular population center or fortification. I also left large expanses of wilderness around and within the national boundaries to permit characters room to expand and also to adventure outside the strict limitations of the social and legal patterns in the "civilized" areas.

It is impossible for a Game Master to develop every detail beforehand when conducting a campaign on this scope, so many specific elements of play are left untended until shortly before the action is proceeding into an area. When the action can be expected to move into a new area, I then develop the principal NPCs in the region, detailed maps of the countryside, etc., which are necessary to carry the role play. To assist in this, I designed a number of lists of "standardized" NPCs, several "model" villages, towns, and castles, and a few other elements of local "colour" which I can activate at need. I have not randomized these elements, however, as I prefer to have a largely *preplanned* region available to permit me more time to develop atmosphere and attend to the role play of the participants. Randomization is used only where I deem a sudden and unplanned encounter, etc.,

to be appropriate to the story-line I and my players are evolving though our moment-to-moment interactions.

Of course, once an NPC does appear on the scene, he becomes part of the on-going campaign, and characters often choose at later dates to seek them out. For instance, one character always makes it a point to call upon several of his NPC "friends" when he is in the area. Not only is this "in character," an expected courtesy, but it often provides food and lodging for the night and a source of much needed intelligence about what has happened in the region while the character was absent. (Such meetings permit me to "brief" players on current conditions without disturbing the atmosphere we are trying to create and maintain. It also limits significantly the kind and amount of information that the characters could know, which affects role play significantly.) I often make notes of such encounters to maintain later continuity of my NPCs own personalities and roles in actions that develop in the future.

Needless to say, I have brought a lot of bookkeeping upon myself because I have chosen to run a campaign of large scope. One could just as easily keep the action in a fairly small region. Design is solely a reflection of the Game Master's preferences and the availability of time.

We aim at developing "local colour" out of the conviction that atmosphere is essential to role playing *in character*. This conditions the "feel" of Archaeron.

For example, the religious life of the feudal regions is highly varied, with two basic religions predominating. One is loosely modelled on Christianity, but while its outer trappings resemble "Christianity," the Faith involves worship of the High One who sent his Prophet to give men the Word. Believers are somewhat intolerant of variant beliefs, and members of different sects often become embroiled in most unseemly shouting matches and brawls over an article of faith. Further, to provide variety, one region has no priestly class as such, only monastics who live somewhat cloistered lives and who provide some of their number to perform "priestly" tasks amongst the general population, as well as to minister to their medical needs because they are also the local physicians. Another nation has a priestly hierarchy right up to Primate, but no monastics. One of the nations has a "Pope" or spiritual head of the church who lays claim to the obedience of all true believers—but that authority is not recognized in many of the other nations. Or again, in several states, the separation of Church and State is complete, with clerics subject to canon law and immune from the laws and courts of the temporal ruler. In others, the clergy are clearly under the authority of the monarch or the local lords.

Several of the feudal states are devoted to the worship of the Dark Lord, a religion dating back to the Empire of the Dragon Kings. The priests of the Dark Lord are really Mages, Hex Masters or Necromancers, who perform no "miracles" in the *C&S* sense, but rather rely upon magical spells and Demonology for their power. To escape European connotations, the names and some of the abilities of Demons have been altered, and specific rites have been evolved to invoke and control them which do not appear in the basic *C&S*. Local colour is thus served, and I can escape the fundamentally

mediaeval European flavour of *C&S* to create the "feel" of another "reality."

In short, I "meddle" with my own rules to produce the environments I desire. The monastic priest/physicians of the Marches, for instance, have no miraculous curative powers but rather rely on the medical skills as outlined in the Physician rules in the *Sourcebook*, while ordinary "brothers" have chirurgeon skills. They are also total pacifists in that they will learn no use of arms and depend upon the highly warlike Holy Fighting Orders (whose members have *no* clerical powers) to defend them. In Artegon, the seat of the "Pope," the physician arts are forbidden and all medical treatment is performed by the Priests. And so on. In this way, each "class" of player character is modified according to locality and so becomes a sub-class. All one has to do is disconnect some of the modules governing his class or add others to it, or to prohibit certain character types from arising in a particular locality because of the nature of the religion. Paladins, for instance, some only from the Holy Land and may practise only three miracles per day (a deliberate limiting of their powers as outlined in *C&S*).

The same "meddling" is even more present in the matter of the practise of Magick. Primitive Talents may arise anywhere, but the learned arts are restricted according to locality. If a character has a calling to a branch of the Arcane which is not a subject of specialization in his region, he can advance only to MKL 7, after which he must journey to a center in which his Art is practised to a high degree. In Archaeron, for instance, Necromancy, Alchemy, Astrology, and Witchcraft (Hex Mastery) is a high art. In the Marches, Forestry and Weaponcraft is the specialty. In Artegon, practise of Magick of any kind is a burning offense, but Shaman may be found in the wild hills of the region, where the people still hold to many of the Old Ways despite the power of the Church. In Kargard, Mages specialize in Cabbalism and the Magick Square. Furthermore, there may be internal specialization as well, for in Erewhon the practise of Enchantment emphasizes Illusion, while in the city of Delgon in Archaeron (the only center for the study of Enchantment Magick in the land) it is Command which is emphasized. I have also limited the numbers and kinds of spells readily assessible, which requires characters to go out and find ancient scrolls and books or else managed to "influence" a Great Master to accept them as apprentices or students.

Social rank has different meanings in different regions. In Archeron, it is the Mages who occupy the positions of "nobility," with status being determined by magical proficiency and political power. Their "underground" rule extends far beyond the borders of their land through the Kingdom of Hwicca. In Artegon, only Priests hold rank worth mentioning. I have developed, therefore, a number of tables to determine social rank which are variations of those in *C&S*.In the Marches, for instance, one may be a knight, but all command ranks are held by Knights of the Fighting Orders. The social determination table for this region is therefore significantly different than it is for Artegon. Systems are, to repeat what I said earlier, nothing

but the instruments to produce desired results and must be modified accordingly. The Only True Way is the one a Game Master requires to create *his* world. There is not now, nor will there ever be a universal set of rules which will meet all the needs of all players.

Within the "civilized" lands I control are a number of places of mystery—often ruined towers or even deserted cities abandoned since the collapse of the Empire. These serve as local sources of legend and sometimes of horror which require exploration by intrepid bands of characters. Such places are even more common in the wilderlands beyond the boundaries of the settled regions. I have about 20 "dungeons" which I use in the campaign, some of which are decidedly low key and are suited for penetration by low-level characters. We have an understanding that such penetrations will not be made by high-level characters, nor will exceptional magicks be employed during the adventures—and that means on both sides. This gives the beginners to the game and the low-level characters a chance. On the other hand, there are places so hostile and magical that even the Great amongst us approach with extreme caution. In any event, the amount of magick, treasure, and monsters located in such places of mystery are limited and finite. They can, in short, be totally exhausted and thereby rendered "safe." In this way I avoid the inbred practise of adding and adding and adding to an existing "dungeon" or breeding countless monsters simply to provide further opposition to the characters. I like something new, too, and putting all my eggs in one basket is too limiting. Furthermore, by providing "mini-dungeons" which are easily drawn up and which can be encountered by wayfarers quite unexpectedly as they journey along on an overland adventure, all of us have a wider range of options.

For example, in one expedition, a band of characters remarked a dark tower outlined against the sky on a distant ridge; and though they could not investigate because of other pressing business, on a later date several returned with other characters to discover its secrets. The fact is that I was prepared for an immediate penetration on the first occasion, but the adventure scenario could be played around it. The players so opted, but noted the tower's existence for future adventuring.

Again, many of our characters have designed their own residences, which always have the capability of becoming "mini-dungeons" to be invaded by others. In such cases, the player of that character becomes the Game Master for tha portion of the adventure—often with excellent results. Nor do such places have to belong to Mages, as we often have adventures in which no magick is practised.

The wilderland is a region in which almost "anything goes." Unexplored and untamed, it is the natural place to allow encounters of dangerous beasts and "wandering" monsters, and the random tables we developed are printed in the *Sourcebook*. Whether it is only a group of characters out on an afternoon's hunt or a full-scale expedition being mounted to reach a distant destination, the outdoors becomes an exciting arena in which players can practise woodcraft and take into account the problems of outdoors survival, as well as confront murderous ambushes, legendary beasts, and unexpected places of mystery.

In one section of my wilderland is a great valley surrounded by a high range of mountains cut by only a few treacherous passes. Inside is a small region populated by rugged frontiersmen and intrepid settlers, an outlaw band, and a tribe of dwarves. This is the "settled" region, and it is wilder than most. Beyond the Black River, to the east, is a great forest. The Enchanted Forest, for so it is, has been transformed over the centuries by an Enchanter reputed to have lived even in the days of the Empire and who, apparently, is still alive! Once inside the forest, subtle Illusion spells begin to work on members of any party venturing there. Thus all is not as it seems. I have the actual map of the region as it *is*, but by the time a party is several miles within the forest, my map and theirs are significantly different. Physical details are altered by spells creating illusory landscapes, and sense of distance and time are lost so that even the illusions are not placed where they in fact occured, if someone is mapping.

One party which penetrated this strange forest included my own Alchemist, Anhydrous Distillatus, a Necromancer by the unlikely name of Gravely Headstone, and an assortment of other characters including a squire of ducal rank (his Knight and sergeants had been poisoned by Anhydrous when the squire converted to the Dark Lord and was about to be returned by his Knight to the fury of his Crusader father), a female High Elf studying medicine with Anhydrous, her two NPC Wood Elf guards, a drug-using Sergeant, three dwarves, and a thief. One by one the characters succumbed to the illusions of the forest. Anhydrous, who resisted again and again, kept falling asleep, utterly fatigued because of the strain of his resistance. That something was amiss became apparent early in the adventure when one of the dwarves suddenly attacked a stand of fir trees, shouting a battle cry and calling upon his companions to aid him in slaying the fell trolls!

Soon afterward, the party met five trolls feeding upon the body of a hapless wayfarer. The fighters insisted on attacking but the Mages mereley drew an enchanted circle of protection and waited for events to unfold, amusing themselves in the meantime with highly erudite discussions of fine points involved in the enchantments of magical focii. Only grudgingly did they break off this fascinating talk when the cries of their companions for assistance broke their concentration, and a few fireballs were loosed to drive off the pesky trolls and get things down to a point where a "man could think." Subsequently, while exploring the mysteries of a magical pool whose contents kept changing their magical qualities each time they were tested, the party was surprised by a huge band of trolls and goblinoids. Taking cover, all except the Alchemist and the Necromancer prepared an ambush, while those two worthies took position in the open to confront their foes and try to play a huge bluff. As soon as the trolls appeared with their goblinoid subordinates, the Mages challenged them and demanded that they give an account of themselves. Expending a few of his precious flasks of magick fire to create an awesome aspect, Anhydrous played the part of a powerful Mage (far beyond his MKL 9), while MKL 1 Necromancer Gravely Headstone had his only undead, a skeleton in armour, remove his helm and stare at the assembled band of monsters with vacant eyesockets. Several warning shots loosed from the surrounding woods, an arrow deflected bythe Circle of Protection back into the throat of the Uruk Hai who shot it at Anhydrous (Gravely's luck is phenomenal; it was the most spectacular randomized critical hit I've yet seen!), and another gout of flame at the feet of the Chief Troll (the second last of Anhydrous' flasks of magick fire), and the whole mob broke and ran. It was a superb piece of role playing.

Incidentally, during this adventure, Anhydrous was NPCed by Wilf Backhaus, who knew my character's personality well enough to anticipate what I would have had him do.

Subsequent adventures included a meeting with the incomparable Arrgh Ruffluk, the canniest troll in the region, who asked the party to bear messages to his brother and his family, a sojourn in a vale of flowers as the guest of a beautiful maid (MKL 20 Conjurer) whose proffered drinks of greeting converted one member of the party into a frog and another into a 2-inch midget, a bridge defended by a Brazen Bull (which sustained 200 points of damage from thrown rocks without being slowed down), and a score of other encounters ranging from pure fun to deadly seriousness.

Much of the success of this, and other adventures arose from the character play.

Anhydrous and his apprentice, for instance, have a continual struggle for supremacy. Deathly afraid of spiders, Anhydrous is constantly afflicted by the appearance of these hateful creatures—which his apprentice studiously captures and releases whenever he is irritated at the treatment he is accorded. The apprentice, in turn, is afraid of running water and sunlight, which Anhydrous exploits to good results. Anhydrous and the drug-user are partners, running an Apocathery and Alchemy Shoppe in the city of ARchaeron between adventures. Gravely Headstone met the trio at an inn, discovered their mutual interest in magick and soon became fast friends. Falling into the company of a beautiful female Elf while journeying to Grimsdale (the mountain-fast valley), Gravely and Anhydrous discovered her interest in medicine and shared with her some of their knowledge of anatomy. Finding that she was journeying to visit relatives who live in the forest beyond Grimsdale, they invited her and her guards to join the party. Further on, at an inn, they met a Knight, a squire, and two sergeants in company with three dwarves who were leading them to their home in Grimsdale. And thus the plot unfolds, the party is made up, and alliances are formed.

Indeed, it was only because Anhydrous is an adherent of Morgoth that he poisoned the wrathful guardian/Knight to protect the squire, who had been converted by Gravely's persuasive tongue to the worship of Morgoth. (One could not count his "worldliness" and his eagerness to find a rich patron as motives, for Anhydrous is a "devout" man.)

In short, many of the developments in the adventure came from the players as they reacted to the situations, and after a time I was responding to *their* lead.

Archaeron is the product of several minds, not just my own. This appears repeatedly in role play. It also appears in campaign design. Trevor Clarke is developing his own region as Game Master. Riyad Jones controls the "Arab" lands and uses them to paly test the systems he is developing for *Saracen & Crusader*—a delightful mixture of history and the Arabian Nights. Robbie Greenhill controls the Holy Land, wherein all our Crusades occur. Because we have been playing together for some time, and because we simply enjoy each other's company, our tastes and procedures are similar. Thus we find no difficulty in cross-play and can bring characters fro one region into another without difficulty. Indded, we are Game Masters together and, even in the middle of a scenario, can step out of character momentarily to solve a problem to mutual satisfaction.

Our youngest player, Rick Nickel, has developed the Nordic lands across the Western Sea, and threatens us constantly with raids and pillage. Of real interest are two large islands he has designed which contain a troll culture and a goblinoid culture—actual *nations* of monsters! Woe betide any ship lost in the perpetual fog which surrounds these dread isles, for mariners cast ashore there by shipwreck are hard pressed to survive. (Rick is 15, a veteran of one year in *C&S*, and has ruthlessly mastered the rules to such a point that we are learning from him, now.)

The key to success, we have found, is *knowledge* of the rules because that knowledge not only permits us to apply those systems apropriate to the situation, but also allows us to understand when to *ignore* cetain provisions when their application would interfere with the role play. Second, we function as a *team* and arrive at common policies so that there is consistency between the various parts of the world we Game Master. I don't have to be present to know what the other Game Masters have done, and I cannot think of an occasion when their approach to application of the rules did not parallel mine. Third, we are *friends* who enjoy each other's company and contributions, and who have a common stake in creating an ongoing fantasy world in which we all feel comfortable. This last consideration overrides any personal drive to "win" at any cost and smooths over situations which could otherwise become tense.

We have developed several hundred player/characters, and thus we all help to populate the world in addition to the NPCs. Because we have provision for character advancement in between expeditions, and because we can compute character experience in wars (miniatures battles) or by enchanting and learning spells, it is not necessary to play the same character week by week to get somewhere. Our playing group itself never numbers more than 10 and often a meeting has only 5 or 6 players, so communication is effective and team effort is possible in a way that is difficult to attain in larger groups. Of most significance, everyone has a chance to contribute, thereby taking a large portion of the load from the Game Master's shoulders.

THE CULT OF GEO

By Greg Stafford

Geo was one of the friends who accompanied Sartar as early as his entry into Dragon Pass. Tales say that he was Sartar's cook and ale-brewer. Like several of Sartar's other early companions, Geo was influential in aiding the king to establish himself in his future kingdom. After Sarter was apotheosized as the spirit of the nation several of his friends also found immortality and worship as spirits of minor cults. Geo was one, who founded a hospitality cult sometimes called "Geo's Salvation Army."

Sartar lived in Dragon Pass between the years 1407-1520. During this period were the Telmore Wars, and Sartar was influential in establishing that werewolf-worshipping tribe in Dragon Pass. One Sartar tribe, called the Sanchali, was badly mauled by the invaders before being rescued by Sartar, but according to the peace settlements the few remaining refugees were bereft of their old lands and left without a home.

Geo offered them refuge, and received from his leader the permission to establish several inns to house them in other tribes' property, especially the newly-founded cities. The tribe accepted, thus maintaining a meagre tribal identity. Afterwards the members of Geo's cult were sometimes called Sanchali, and the best cooks and brewers among them could trace a lineage to the original tribe. Geo himself wed a widow of the tribe.

The first Geo's was Geo's Ridge Inn, located at the northern edge of the Quivin Hills, just south of Jonstown. During his life he opened other inns in each of the cities founded by Sartar (Wilms Church, Swenstown, Jonstown, and Boldhome), and these inns: Geo's Always Open Inn, Geo's Last Stop Inn, Geo's Creek Inn, and Geo's at Runegate. Since we are unsure of the exact date of his death and/or apotheosis we cannot be sure if he personally opened the other inns in body or just in spirit. These include Geo's Cave Inn, Geo's Duck Inn, Geo's River Inn (in Dragonewt territory), and Geo's Horsing Around Inn (in Queens Post, Grazelands). It is fairly certain tht Geo's Shaker Inn and the others in the former Tarsh territories were established during the reigns of other Kings or princes of Sartar. These include the two at Alda-chur and Alone, and Geo's Outer Inn. Geo's at Pavis certainly was founded after his life as well. There are also several in the Holy Country. Finally, no one who has not been there is sure of the location or origin of Geo's Hideaway Inn.

There may be some frivolity in the naming of some of these places, and occasional joviality or ribaldry may occur within their walls. Occasional warriors and many visitors are offended or curious about this. But there is often little else for an adventurer to laugh at, and maybe nowhere else where he could relax enough to enjoy and humor at all. Geo's provides the place and source.

Membership is open to any citizen of Sartar, or close friends. The bulk of membership is made up of adventurers, outlaws, and other wanderers. It also attracts drunkards, sluggards, and ne'e'r do wells who see it as a place of easy (if meagre) comfort. But these latter types are inevitably captured by the air of adventure which lies thick in the inns, and are cured of their laziness or ill habits so that they will eagerly join an expedition.

Caretakers of the inns are veterans who took too many wounds, got brain damage, or were otherwise forced to retire before they reached independence or death. Veterans incapable of adventure or war happily sweep the floors, change sleeping straw, cook, and brew ale for their healthier companions. The inns are a

terrific source for gossip and tales, or hints about possible treasures lost, not found, or otherwise hinted at.

Benefits of the cult are those which the far-from-home most need: a safe bed, friends, and a warm meal. The cult will guarantee its members *at least* a bowl of porridge and tankard of ale and bed in the hay, anytime they go to any Geo's. There is sometimes healing to be found there, or at least a change of bandages and some surgery if necessary. These are minimums, though, and the inns usually are able to offer more to their members.

This is paid for by several means, but NOT by dues from its members. Geo founded the place to take care of those temporarily incapable of paying for their own provender. As indicated below, members are members for life, and a part of the pledge says "His own take care of Geo." The people who manage to become chieftans, merchants, or ranking cult members should recall who gave them shelter when they were down and out. If they do not they are visited by dreams, first, cult members later, and finally by Geo's Bouncer. Thus there is an irregular but somewhat reliable stream of donations which arrive at the inns to raise the quality of the free meal and free drink for members. The Sartar royal house traditionally supplied ale-making supplies.

Additional income is generated from paying, non-member customers who stay the night. Geo's will usually extend this to friends of friends, but no paying customer will receive a crust of bread until all members have received their share, and only then if it can be spared and handsomely paid for.

Members can join if they pass the entrance requirement of being a Sartar citizen, or a close friend of a citizen, and if they swear to uphold the rules of the cult. These rules are that members must always respect the hospitality of Geo, and never fight among themselves or allow others to fight inside the inn; when membes meet and know or notice that they are members they must stop whatever they are doing and "have a round for Geo," even though this may be a short sip of water upon a savage battlefield; they must occasionally stand guard duty or perform other tasks in the inn; and they must never forget who offered them refuge in their time of need.

Once these things are sworn to then a member receives a brand on his right little finger. Showing this scar will get him automatic entry past the porters of any Geo's thereafter. The porters can instantly recognize a forged brand.

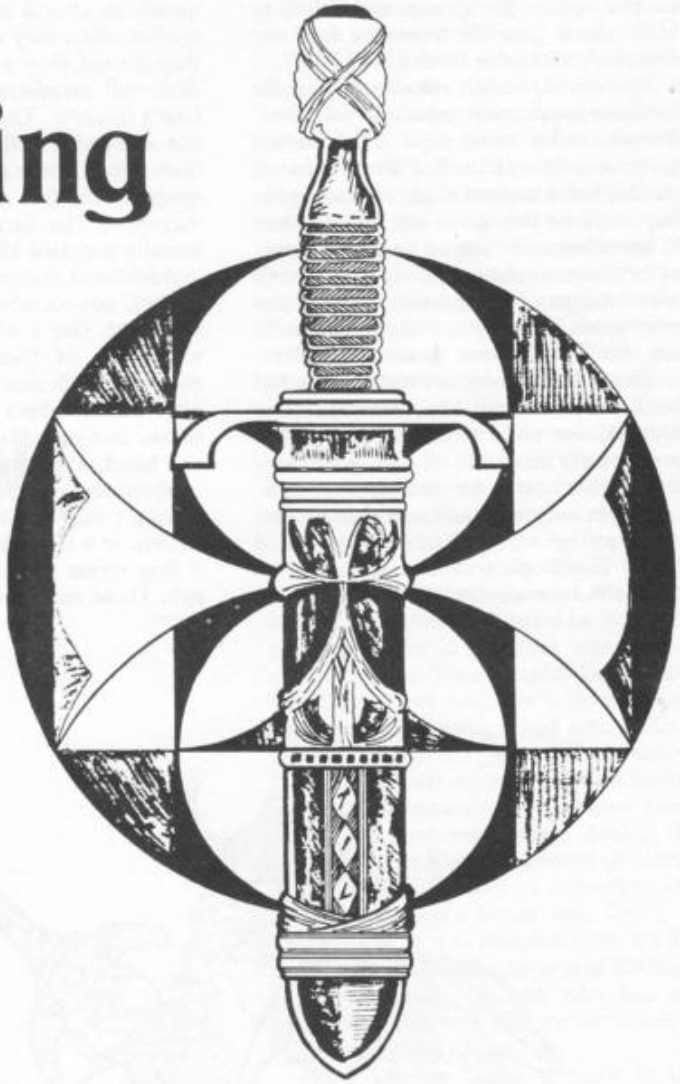
Enforcement of the cult regulations lies upon its members who are present. If this is not sufficient, or if some crime is perpetrated which other members may not know about, then the matter is left up to Geo's Bouncer. The original identity of this person is unknown, but the reality of his presence and power is well established.

Geo's Bouncer can be seen anyplace in the kingdom, and cannot be mistaken. He rides upon a two-wheeled oxcart drawn by a huge black ox. Upon the cart is a hanging gallows with several nooses, a beheading block and basket, and an all-iron box which is never opened. The Bouncer is bare-armed, but otherwise covered with black leather. His unblinking eyes stare out of an executioner's hood. He carries an immense iron and silver double-bitted axe. He never eats, but lives by drinking blood from the ox. He speaks only to Geo's members, either a gruff but friendly greeting to offer a drink of his bulls blood, or to state their crime while he trusses or otherwise prepares them for execution. (It is not offensive to refuse someone else's drink, but the refuser must supply his own.)

Although apolitical in nature the cult has always been closely associated with the house of Sartar. In my campaign which takes place in 1611, only nine years after the sack of Boldhome, the cult is rather poor but very popular among the conquered Sartarites. Lunar citizens and friends are expelled from the cult, never allowed inside the inn walls, and distrusted by all cult members. Lunar authorities believe it to be a den of sedition, but generally leave it alone as a sop to the conquered nation. It is also rumored that the empire fears Geo's Bouncer.

Role-Playing

by Steve Lortz



WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

If all you're ever going to do is play around with a particular RPG, you don't need to do much analysis, but if you're going to write your won rules, or even just talk about RPGs in general, you've got to ask yourself, "What the heck is a role-playing game, anyway?" How is one organized and what makes it different from other sorts of games? Some time ago, I had to ask myself these questions, and this article is intended to convey a few of the answers I came up with.

First off, a "role-playing game" is any game which allows a number of players to assume the roles of imaginary characters and operate with some degree of freedom in an imaginary environment. This statement may seem too broad to have defined the subject, but actually it's the only definition wide enough to embrace the variety of pastimes known as RPGs. A genre with scope enough to encompass wizards and starships, wrestlers and rabbits, obviously can't be typed by subject matter, and the diversity of techniques invented by ingenious game-masters makes it impossible to define RPGs by the mechanics used. There is a distinction between RPGs and other sorts of games, but we're going to have to examine the structure of role-playing games before I can point out the difference.

The amount of imaginary time that passes in the lives of the characters will differ from the amount of actual time that passes in the lives of the players during a game. The imaginary time is known as "game time," and the actual time is known as "real" or "playing time."

The basic unit of action in a role-playing game is the "move," a segment of play which represents a specific amount of game time. Moves are broken down into "turns" and "phases" in order to regulate the activities which occur. Turns are usually used to regulate the precedence that characters take over one another in performing their actions, while phases are usually used to regulate the order in which various types of activities are performed.

The "scale" of a move indicates the specific amount of game time the move is intended to represent. Role-playing rules characteristically present mechanics for governing moves on a number of different scales, the most common ones being week-long, day-long, and hour-long moves, as well as what are sometimes called "melee" moves, ranging from a few seconds to a full minute in length. Shifting between scales permits a steady flow of action in real time, even if nothing of dramatic importance is happening in a particular stretch of game time.

Moves are ordered together into "sequences" of moves. A sequence is a group of moves occurring sequentially in game time, played out on the same scale, and linked by a continuing flow of dramatically significant action.

The next higher grouping of game activities is the "session," a number of moves or sequences played out at one place in real space and time. A session is usually several hours long and occurs at a gathering place convenient to the gamesters.

A "scenario" is a closed-ended amount of play, usually occupying no more than one session.

A role-playing "campaign" is an open-ended amount of play involving the adventures of an on-going cast of characters, usually mastered by an individual person and played out over a number of sessions. Sometimes, it's possible for characters to cross over from one campaign to another, and for this reason, the set of all campaigns is occasionally referred to as the "multiverse."

Sessions, scenarios, and campaigns, as well as specific sets of rules, are all sometimes called "games."

Bearing these things in mind, it's now possible to state the difference between RPGs and other types of games. Most track, board, and miniature rules are written to govern the conduct of an isolated dramatic event, and are usually played out on a single scale. In other words, these rules are generally designed to govern only what has been defined as a sequence of moves. By

providing mechanisms for playing out sequences on a number of different scales, and for making transitions between them, RPGs go far beyond the other games in allowing a game-master to maintain a continuity which creates the illusion of life. This illusion is what has made RPGs so tremendously popular.

RULE ORGANIZATION IN RPGs

The fact that RPGs come to life as a result of the game-master's imaginative guidance rather than a strict adherence to rigid rules has meant that no two campaigns are ever alike, either in form or content. Game-masters are free to use the systems they find aesthetically pleasing, and with the proliferation of RPG titles, it becomes increasingly difficult to find a campaign based purely on one set of rules. Accordingly, different sets of RP rules are often more complementary than competitive.

This complementarity is good for the hobby, since it sells more of every publisher's product and provides rules to suit every game-master's taste, yet this co-operative aspect of RPGs has been hampered by the fact that no standard organizational form, like the one prevailing among board game rules, has evolved for role-playing games. Not only does this lack of standardization hinder incorporation of diverse systems into a campaign, it also deprives game designers of a means for gauging their efforts, severely limits the number of RPGs a person can analyze, and increases the difficulty of referring to specific systems within a set of rules. The deficiency in rule organization seems to arise from the fact that RPG designers have been classifying systems according to their subject matter, and since every game's content is different, every game has a different structure.

This article proposes an alternate method for organizing rules, based on classifying systems by the functions they perform, and presents a mini-RPG designed to demonstrate the method.

Systems and Their Functions

First, a "system" needs to be defined as a group of rules which operate together to perform one primary function and, possibly, several secondary functions within a game.

Just as there are a limitless number of potential role-playing situations, there are a limitless number of specific functions that rule systems can perform; however, if we examine systems in terms of the *general* functions accomplished, we find that there are only four major types: generation, encounter, resolution, and response systems. These categories can be described, including when and by whom they are used, as follows:

- generation systems are those used by the game-master and players outside the course of play to create the characters and their environment,
- encounter systems are those used by the game-master during the course of play to determine what events befall the characters,
- resolution systems are those used by the game-master and the players during the course of play to determine the degree of success characters have in performing various actions,
- response systems are those used by the game-master during the course of play to determine the environment's reactions to the characters' actions.

Other Components

Though they don't fall into any of the above listed categories, there are two other types of information necessary for playing an RPG. These are a basic description of the game and a general model for move structure. The "mise-en-scene," a theatrical term meaning the arrangement of actors and scenery on a stage, contains a few notes showing what kind of game the designer intends, a summary of scales, and a brief account of the imaginary environment, characters, and objectives. Move structure is delineated in a section entitled Sequence of Play.

Except in a very limited RPG, such as the one given below, the sequence of play is a very difficult thing to state concisely, but the designer really ought to make the effort. The unforseeable nature of RP adventures and the leeway given to game-masters means that whole books can be written about running RPGs, but this doesn't excuse the designer who substitutes the phrase "use your imagination" for some declaration of how the game should be played!

The Game

As Shakespeare would say, the play's the thing, so after all this folderol, we finally present *Cannibals and Castaways*, the world's simplest complete role-playing game!

Cannibals and Castaways

I. *Mis-en-scene: Cannibals and Castaways* is a mini-role-playing game designed to be played by two people, one player and one game-master. The environment is a desert island inhabited by cannibals, while the player-characters are a band of castaways wrecked on its shore. The object of the player-characters is to survive until rescued by a passing ship, either by making peace with the cannibals, or by killing them. The game is designed to be played on a single scale with one move representing one game-day.

II. Sequence of Play

A. Before play begins, the player determines the number of castaways in his party in accordance with section III.A.

B. A move consists of the following sequence of phases:
   1. Encounter Phase
   2. Castaway Action Phase
   3. Environment Response Phase

C. The Encounter Phase
   1. During the Encounter Phase, the game-master determines what event befalls the castaways in accordance with section IV.
   2. The game-master then announces the nature of the day's encounter to the player.

D. The Castaway Action Phase
   1. During the Castaway Action Phase, the player announces what action the castaways take in regard to any cannibals or ships encountered that day.
   2. If the castaways attack the cannibals, combat is conducted in accordance with section V.A.
   3. If the castaways choose not to attack the cannibals, or if they are trying to attract the attention of a passing ship, play progresses to the Environment Response Phase.

E. The Environment Response Phase
   1. If the castaways have encountered cannibals, the game-master determines the cannibals' response in accordance with the section VI. A. during this phase. Any combat called for is conducted in accordance with section V.A.
   2. If the castaways have tried to attract the attention of a passing ship, the game-master determines the ships' response in accordance with section VI. B. during this phase.

F. The game continues until:
   1. The castaways are rescued by a passing ship,
   2. The cannibals are all dead, or
   3. The castaways have all been eaten.

III. Generation Systems

A. Generating Castaways

1. The player determines the number of castaways in the party by rolling 1D6 and consulting Table III. A. Castaways.

Table III. A. Castaways

1D6	# in party
1	2
2,3	3
4,5	4
4,5	5

2. During the course of play, the player keeps track of the number of castaways, making any subtractions called for by combat results.

B. Generating Cannibals

1. During the Encounter Phase when cannibals are first met with, the game-master determines their number by rolling 1D6.
2. The game-master then reveals the size of the cannibal party to the player.
3. The number of cannibals on the island is rolled for only once during a game.
4. During the course of play, the game-master keeps track of the number of cannibals, making any subtractions called for by combat results.

IV. Encounter Systems

A. During each Enounter Phase, the game-master rolls 1D6 and consults Table IV. A. Encounters, in order to determine what event befalls the castaways during the move.

Table IV. A. Encounters

1D6	result
1,2	castaways meet cannibals
3,4	nothing happens
5,6	a ship comes into view

V. Resolution Systems

A. Combat

1. Combat cannot occur unless the game-master has rolled a meeting with cannibals during the move's Encounter Phase.
2. The combat resolution system can be operated only once during a phase.
3. Combat is resolved as follows:
   a. the game-master and the player determine the Odds Index (O.I.)
   b. the game-master or the player determines the Combat Result
   c. the game-master or the player applies the Combat Result
4. Determining the Odds Index
   a. the game-master and the player compare the number of cannibals to the number of castaways on Table V. A. 4. Odds to find the Odds Index

Table V. A. 4. Odds

# castaways	# cannibals					
	1&-	2	3	4	5	6
1	C	B	B	A	A	A
2	D	C	C	B	B	B
3	D	C	C	C	B	B
4	E	D	C	C	C	B
5	E	D	D	C	C	C

note: -2 from cannibals' # on castaways' first attack

   b. during a game's first combat resulting from a castaway attack on the cannibals, two points are subtracted from the number of cannibals when determining the Odds Index. The numbers of the parties are not modified on any other occasion.
5. Determining Combat Results
   a. the game-master or the player rolls 1D6 and compares the score with the Odds Index on Table V. A. 5. Combat Results.

Table V. A. 5. Combat Results

	Odds Index				
1D6	A	B	C	D	E
1	1C	1C	1C	1C	1C
2	1C	1C	1C	—	—
3	1C	—	—	—	—
4	—	—	—	—	/K
5	—	—	1K	1K	1K
6	1K	1K	1K	1K	1K

note: 1C - 1 castaway captured and eaten
— - draw, no effect
1K - 1 cannibal killed

6. Combat Results
   a. "1C" means one castaway has been captured and eaten
   b. "-" means the combat is a draw with no effect
   c. "1K" means one cannibal has been killed

VI. Response Systems

A. Cannibal Response

1. Cannibal response is determined by the game-master, who rolls 1D6, makes indicated modifications to the score, and consults Table VI. A. Cannibal Response.

Table VI. A. Cannibal Response

1D6	result
3 or less	cannibals retire
4 or more	cannibals attack

note: modifiers to die score:

O.I.	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*
modifier	+2	+1	0	-1	-2

-1 if castaways have never attacked

2. The cannibal response die score is modified as follows:
   a. by the Odds Modifier as indicated in the notes on Table VI. A. Cannibal Response.
   b. if the castaways have never attacked the cannibals, subtract one point.

B. Ship Response System

1. The game-master rolls 1D6. If the score is equal to, or less than the number of castaways left on the island, the ship spots them and they are rescued. If the score is greater than the number of castaways, it fails to see them and steams off into the sunset.

An Example of Play

Pete Player and Gabrielle Game-master decide to kill some time by playing *Cannibals and Castaways,* so Pete rolls a 4 on 1D6 and consults the "Castaways" table to find out that he has 4 unfortunates in his charge. Gabrielle begins play by rolling a 4 on 1D6, consulting the "Encounters" table, and announcing, "All you meet on the first day are some aboriginal coconuts and savage clams."

For the second move's encounter, Gabrielle rolls a 6.

"Looks like you may be in luck today, you spot a tramp steamer just off the reef."

"We light a fire and try to make smoke signals."

Gabrielle gauges the ship's response by rolling a 5.

"Sorry, but the lookout's drunk and only waves at you as the ship goes by."

Moving on to the next day's encounter phase, Gabrielle rolls a 2. She then rolls again to find out how many cannibals there are.

"As you're strolling down to the beach, you run into the Cannibal King and a couple of his men!"

Pete looks at the "Odds" table and sees that he can change the Odds Index from "C" to "E" by attacking the cannibals first. A crafty expression crosses his face.

"We're gonna jump the head-hunters!"

Pete consults the "E" column on the "Combat Results" table, and much to his chagrin, rolls a 1, reducing the size of his party by one member.

Play passes to the environment response phase, and Gabrielle checks the cannibal reaction. She notices that the Odds Index is now "C," and since the castaways have already attacked the cannibals, there are no modifiers to the response die score. She rolls a 6 and checks the "Cannibal Response" table to determine that the savages attack.

"The Cannibal King must appreciate your company, Pete, he's returning your little social call."

Gabrielle considers the "C" column on the "Combat Results" table, and rolls another 1.

"Your bunch of sad-sack sand crabs has been decimated again! When are they gonna learn to walk and chew betel nuts at the same time?"

"Aw, fooey, let's get on to the next move."

The fourth encounter die score is a 2.

"You come face-to-face with your perdurable playmates again."

Pete realizes his only hope for survival now lies in conserving his numbers.

"We smile large smiles and try to exit, stage right!"

Gabrielle rolls a 1 for cannibal response.

"They must still be full from last night's feast, they let you go."

On the fifth encounter roll, the die comes up 6.

"Today, you spot another steamer, evidently bound for Rio."

"Not only are we lighting a signal fire, this time we're down on the beach, leaping, shouting, and waving our drawers!"

Gabrielle assesses the ship's response by rolling a 2. Shouts of "Hurrah! Hurrah! We're saved!" Pete and Gabrielle adjourn to the kitchen, where they split a diet soft drink.

MOVE STRUCTURE IN RPGs

Most RPGs are very specific about the sequence of events which occur during a combat move; however, a lage amount of the action that happens in a full-fledged campaign doesn't involve fighting. Combat move structure is often inappropriate for other sorts of business, so game-masters have been left to their own devices when it comes to organizing non-combat activities of the players and their characters. In this article, I'm going to present a model for move structure applicable to any situation, along with several examples showing how it can be used. After the model, I've included a section on move structure and player involvement. Experienced players can probably understand the model without reading *The Basic Assumptions,* but I've included them for the sake of completeness.

The Basic Assumptions

In order to discover what move structure must accomplish, we need to examine three definitions: 1) a role-playing game is any game which allows a number of players to assume the roles of imaginary characters and operate with some degree of freedom in an imaginary environment; 2) a move is a segment of play which represents a specific amount of game time; and 3) the scale of a move indicates the specific amount of game time the move is intended to represent.

If we conceive of play as consisting of interactions between various parties, we can see from the second definition that the object of move structure will be to accommodate all of the imaginary interactions possible within a given amount of game time. Just what are these interactions?

Since we're interested in developing a structure which can be applied regardless of scale, we will only be deaing with parties and interactions implicit in the first definition. The parties are 1) the characters, and 2) their environment.

Since characters must be able to operate with some degree of freedom, one type of interaction will be those freely initiated by the characters, which suggests that another type will be those interactions freely initiated by the environment. Since many actions are undertaken for the purpose of provoking some reaction from the opposite party, two more types of interactions will be those made by each party in response to the other's actions. Therefore, a model move needs to be structured to accommodate the following four types of interactions: those freely initiated by the characters; those freely initiated by the environment; those initiated by the characters in response to the environment's actions; and those initiated by the environment in response to the characters' actions.

The Model Move

The model move is broken down into four phases which are explained below. A listing of the phases in proper sequence is as follows:

I. Encounter Phase
II. Players' Consultation Phase
III. Player-Character Action Phase
IV. Environment Response Phase

During the Encounter Phase, the game-master uses the game's encounter systems to determine if any element of the environment freely initiates an interaction with the players' characters. The game-master also gives the players any new information which has become available or important to their characters since the last Encounter Phase.

If the player-characters are in a situation where they can work in concert or materially affect each other's action through communication, the players are allowed a period of time to discuss their intentions. This period is the Players' Consultation Phase.

During the Player-Character Action Phase, the players indicate what action their characters are performing. The game-master and the players then use the game's resolution systems to determine the outcome of the player-characters' actions. Ideally, player-characters should be free to respond to the environment however they please, since that's what playing a role is all about! So actions performed by a character during this phase may either be freely initiated or made in response to the environment.

If any of the player-characters performed an action which could provoke a reaction from the environment, the game-master uses the game's response systems during the Environment Response Phase to determine what reaction the environment makes. The game-master and the players then use the game's resolution systems to determine the outcome of the environment's response.

Examples

For the first example, Mircea Istbanescu, Beglerbeg of the Far Sea, and a cleric named Rayorjay are casually looting a room in the complex known as the Well of Chaos, when Ug Gruk the Bugbear enters by the side door. Rayorjay attempts to shut the door while Mircea engages the bugbear with mockery and swordplay. The cleric manages to seal the portal, preventing any further intrusion, while Mircea wounds the monster. Heedless of his injury, Ug Gruk aims a smashing blow at his tormenter, but misses.

In terms of the model, this is what happens:

At the beginning of the move, Mircea and Rayorjay are in a room they've spent the previous move looting.

During the Encounter Phase, die rolls indicate to the game-master that the characters encounter a bugbear. He announces to Kurt and Mark, the players controlling Mircea and Rayorjay, that a bugbear comes through the open door, shouting "I'm Ug Gruk, the Bugbear, and I'm going to eat you!"

Kurt and Mark confer for a moment during the Players' Consultation Phase and decide that it's as important to shut the door as it is to attack the monster. Since Rayorjay is off to one side of the bugbear and closest to the door, he is assigned to close it.

During the Player-Character Action Phase, Mark tells the game-master that Rayorjay is going to try to shut the door, at which Mark and the game-master consult the game's resolution systems and roll a die to determine that Rayorjay is successful. Kurt then tells the game-master that Mircea is striking at the bugbear with his scimitar, shouting "Taste steel, Ug Gruk the Inept, ferocious slayer of blind cripples!" at which Kurt and the game-master consult the combat system and determine that Mircea has wounded the bugbear.

During the Environment Response Phase, the game-master consults the game's response systems and learns that Ug Gruk's morale is not broken by his injury. Since Mircea is the bugbear's most prominent foe, the game-master announces the Ug Gruk is striking at the Beglerbeg with a rusty meat cleaver. Kurt and the game-master then consult the combat system and determine that the monster misses completely. So ends the first illustration.

The second and third examples are drawn from the adventures of Turpin the Foul and his band of thieves. Turpin is a character operated by a player named Bob, and the band of thieves is a group of non-player-characters. Expelled from the town of Pooht, Turpin and his gang are wandering in search of another city where they can ply their trade. The second example move covers a day in which nothing out of the ordinary happens.

During the Encounter Phase, the game-master consults the "over-land encounter" tables and rolls a die to find there are no encounters that day.

Since Bob is the only player in this session, he and the game-master have agreed to dispense with the Players' Consultation Phase.

During the Player-Character Action Phase, Bob tells the game-master that Turpin has issued his standard orders-of-the-day for this journey, namely, that the band is to march toward the northwest on the Old Road with out-riders scouting ahead.

Since no encounter has brought the environment into interaction with the party, and the party is not actively seeking such an interaction, the game-master has only two things to do during the Environment Response Phase. First, he consults his maps and tells Bob about the terrain Turpin is travelling across. Second, he assesses the loyalty of the band of thieves and consults the game's response systems to determine if they remain content under Turpin's leadership. They do, and this ends the second example.

A number of days on the road brings Turpin and his gang to

Lukre, a medium-size city. After lying low for awhile and observing the situation, Turpin decides to use his man-power by setting up an extortion racket. The third example will be a move covering the first week of Turpin's new enterprise, which is operating smoothly.

During the Encounter Phase, the game-master rolls dice and consults the "urban encounter" tables with no result.

Since Bob is still the only player, the Players' Consultation Phase is omitted as in the second example.

During the Player-Character Action Phase, Bob tells the game-master that Turpin is undertaking no extraordinary action this week except overseeing his extortion ring. Bob and the game-master then consult the game's "economic" resolution systems to determine how many shekels Turpin's bullies are able to rip off.

During the Environment Response Phase, the game-master consults the game's response systems, not only to determine if Turpin's thieves remain loyal, but also to find out if the local authorities or underworld have taken note of his activities. Fortunately fo Turpin the Foul, everything is operating as planned.

Comments

These examples show that the model can be applied to moves of any scale, encompass any sort of activity, and be used with nearly any set of rules. I have, however, avoided two problems by presenting these particular illustrations. The first is the problem of player-character conflict, which can be raised by asking the question, "What if Turpin's lieutenant was also a player-character and the two became antagonistic?" The second problem involves the structure of move sequences and transition between scales. This problem can be raised by asking the question, "What if the Lukre authorities had detected Turpin's racket and decided to take action?" I intend to devote space to these problems in future articles.

Move structure implies that the game is conducted in a formal manner with the game-master keeping track of, and announcing turns, phases, and moves. This may seem pedantic at first, and detract from the flow of action, but as the method becomes more familiar, the gamers' ability to work together will improve and actually add to the speed of play. After everyone develops a comfortable understanding of the process, the game-master will find that he can revert to a less formal style most of the time. As with any other aspect of RPGs, move structure can be altered by the game-master when the alteration adds to everyone's enjoyment.

When a game-master keeps move structure in mind, he becomes more readily able to handle extremely complex action or action that goes off on an unforeseen tangent. Awareness of structure contributes to the completeness and consistency of a person's game-mastering.

Player Involvement

The fact that some people were dropping from my early campaigns as a result of boredom first prompted me to think about the structure of the moves. The adventures weren't boring! The people lost interest because the move structure wouldn't permit all of the players to become sufficiently involved. We had already rejected the "group spokesman" type structure, since it allows only one person to play directly, but the ensuing anarchic style of play wasn't satisfactory either. As usually happens when a group falls into disorder, several people with strong personalities became dominant and their boldness limited the involvement of less aggressive people. With these things in mind, I set out to develop a move structure that would temper the ebullience of the forward players and draw the reserved individuals into the game without forming hinderances to imaginative play. The fruit of my effort is the technique below for structuring the Player-Character Action Phase.

The Player-Character Action Phase

Generally, our games are played by a master and anywhere from two to five players seated around a table. When the game-master announces the beginning of the Player-Character Action Phase, the player whose turn it is to go first tells what action his character is performing. If a resolution is called for, the game-master and the player determine the outcome. Then the player sitting to the first player's left tells what his character is doing, and again, the outcome of any resolution called for is determined. This process continues in a clock-wise direction until all the players have had an opportunity to participate directly in the game. This is called a "cycle."

Players are only allowed to operate one character per cycle, so if the players have several characters each, the cycle is repeated until all the characters have had an opportunity to act. Play then proceeds to the Environment Response Phase.

In order to prevent one player from gaining an unfair advantage over the others by acting first every move, the position of first player also rotates to the left from move to move.

For example's sake, assume a game with three players and five characters. Player A is operating characters 1 and 4; player B is operating character 2; and player C is operating characters 3 and 5. The sequence of play during four consecutive Player-Character Action Phases would be as follows:

1st move, 1st cycle — A plays 1, B plays 2, C plays 3
2nd cycle — A plays 4, C plays 5
2nd move, 1st cycle — B plays 2, C plays 3, A plays 4
2nd cycle — C plays 5, A plays 1
3rd move, 1st cycle — C plays 3, A plays 4, B plays 2
2nd cycle — C plays 5, A plays 1
4th move, 1st cycle — A plays 4, B plays 2, C plays 5
2nd cycle — A plays 1, C plays 3

As can be seen, it's not extremely important which of a player's characters he chooses to play first during a move, but it is important that every player gets a fair opportunity for one of his characters to act first.

The players may decide, during the Players' Consultation Phase, that they want their characters to perform some evolution which will require a violation of the normal sequence. It's perfectly all right for the players to set up their own order, as long as everyone agrees and the game-master judges that necessary communications could be carried out by the characters. It should be pointed out that each player-character has free-will and should be able to do as he sees fit during the Player-Character Action Phase.

Tips for GMs

Don't involve too many gamers in a single session. From two to five players make the most practical number.

Don't involve too many player-characters in a single session. The number of characters manageable can vary, depending on the type of adventure, but large groups usually fragment into several small parties. Players who don't have characters in all the parties end up twiddling their thumbs while the game-master tries to do a job which should be done by several game-masters, or in a number of different sessions.

Use a clock with a second hand and limit the real-time length of the Players' Consultation Phase to keep the game moving. Thirty seconds to a minute per player ordinarily provides plenty of time. If the characters are in a situation where they must think fast, curtailing the Players' Consultation Phase can really add authenticity to the game!

AUTHENTIC THAUMATURGY SPECIAL FEATURE

THE QUEST FOR THE SACRED MELITA

by P. E. I. Bonewits and Larry Press

Introduction

We've gotten a lot of useful feedback on the *Authentic Thaumaturgy* magic system suggestions since AT was published. The questions that are most frequently brought up deal with the playability of the system for "dungeon adventures," so we've decided to open this series of articles on AT with just such an adventure scenario. While it's true that the AT system was designed with "entire world" games in mind more than the simpler ones, we think this article, even though it is tongue in cheek, will show clearly that the system is eminently playable no matter how simple or complex a fantasy game may be.

This scenario took us one afternoon to construct and represents a typical dungeon adventure using the AT system. Although the use of "raw talents" should be noted as the primary tool of the lower ranking mages, the actual spells used were quick to construct (about 20 minutes each—which would normally be done before playing) and could each be used quickly in actual play, since each requires (at most) one die throw by the player and one by the referee.

We hope you'll enjoy this stirring saga.

* * *

CAPPUCINA, Rank 3, age 35, female, priestess, specialties are Divination & Healing. PRs: Psi = 16, Piety = 15, Int = 16, Wis = 17, Str = 12, Con = 14, Ego = 15. Max ITR = 70%, Max PoSS 6 85%, Max DMPU = 505 MPs, Max MPRpS = 50 MPs. Psi Talents: Clairvoyance, Telepathic Sending & Receiving, CPK, Negapsi*, Returning, Damping.

NANA, Rank 2, age 27, female, shaman, specialty is Exorcism. PRs: Psi = 13, Piety = 17, Int = 15, Wis = 14, Str = 11, Con = 13, Ego = 13. Max ITR = 60%, Max PoSS = 75% Max CMPU = 270 Mps, Max MPRpS = 35 MPs. Psi Talents: Mesmerism, Astral Projection*, Amplifying, Reddopsi.

MOKO, Rank 2, age 22, male, priest, specialty is Divination. PRs: Psi = 15, Piety = 14, Int = 15, Wis = 12, Str = 15, Con = 17, Ego = 10. Max ITR = 45%/60%, Max PoSS = 75%, Max DMPU = 330 MPs, Max MPRpS = 20 Mps. Psi Talents: Clairaudience, Retrocognition, Levitation*, Deflection, Catapsi, Damping.

ESPRESSO, Rank 1, age 13, male, mode unchosen, no specialty. PRs: Psi = 17, Piety = 16, Int = 15, Wis = 8, Str = 9, Con = 11, Ego = 12. Max ITR = 50%, Max PoSS = 80, Max DMPU = 170 Mps, Max MPRpS = 18 MPs. Psi Talents: Clairgustance*, Telepathic Sending, RSPK, Heat Control, Catapsi*, Apopsi, Retuning, Negapsi.

SCARFACE LOUIE, Nonmage, age 30, male, temple guard ("Level 7 Fighter"). Prs: Psi = 15, Piety = 15, Int = 10, Wis = 12, Str = 17, Con = 15, Ego = 12, Dex = 13. Max ITR = 15%/25%, Max PoSS = 50%, Max DMPU = 105 MPs, Max MPRpS = 16 MPs. Psi Talents: Telepathic Reception, Hypercognition, Klutzokinesis*, Negapsi, Apopsi, Deflection.

ANNIE OAKLEAF, Nonmage, age 23, female, temple guard ("Level 6 Fighter"). Prs: Psi = 8, Piety = 11, Int = 14, Wis = 16, Str = 14, Con = 12, Ego = 12, Dex = 16. Max ITR = 0%, Max PoSS = 50%, Max DMPU = 85 MPs, Max MPRpS = 10 MPs. Psi Talents: Density Control, Filtering.

CAPPUCINA is the High Priestess of a local Javacrucian temple. Her Journey man Priest MOKO and Apprentice ESPRESSO live at the temple with her, as do the guards SCARFACE and ANNIE. The Journeywoman Shaman NANA has been sent by her master for special studies with CAPPUCINA.

During this visit, ESPRESSO carelessly leaves the Sacred Melita on the Blessed Burner overnight. Since this is in the Holy of Holies beneath the temple sanctuary, no one notices until a loud shattering sound is heard in the middle of the night.

All rush to the temple and in anger and dismay the High Priestess tells her Apprentice that his ration of cream and sugar will be cut off indefinitely (which upsets him tremendously, since he is not a follower of the Left Out Path, but rather of the Great Why Brotherhood). Further punishment, she tells him, will be up to the Secret Beans, who are the semi-divine founders of the

Javacrucian Order, and who live high in the Andes (mountain grown, they're the wisest kind). Then she orders him to clean up the mess, and everyone else goes back to sleep as best they can.

The next day, CAPPUCINA calls them all together for a conference. Without the Sacred Melita they have been unable to prepare the sacred Elixer of Awareness. This is a minor disaster to them but will be a major one for their congregation if a replacement Melita is not found soon. The High Priestess remembers an abandoned Javacrucian temple in the wilderness which may still have a Sacred Melita in its Holy of Holies. If they can fetch it, the long trip to the Andes will be saved, they will gain much merit by rescuing it and returning it to its proper use, and the first and second rank mages will gain some useful experience on what should be a piece of coffeecake expedition. The decision is made to go.

The week's journey there is uneventful. Soon they are standing before the high coffee-colored (what else?) wall that surrounds the abandoned temple. CAPPUCINA has not become a Rank 3 Cleric by being careless, so she decides to spend a minute doing some divination with her Clairvoyance and Telepathic Receiving, using her old favorite the SPELL OF THE CLAIRVOYANT COFFEE CRYSTAL. This will cost her 7 Mana Points ("MPs") and has a 80% chance of success. She tells everyone else to back off and be quiet and starts pulling out her crystal.

Spell of the Clairvoyant Coffee Crystal
(to be used by Mistress Cappucina)

Props:	A Blessed Coffee Crystal (3" bubble of pyrex, filled Elixir, sealed.			
Talents:	Clairvoyance	14%p.i.	3MPs	(base)
	Tele Rec	16%	4 MPs	(base)
Laws:	Invoc (Mrs. O.)	10%	(Piety=15)	
	Names (Mrs. O.)	15%	(secret name)	
	Cont (Mrs.O.)	12%	(crystal)	
Bonus:	Specialty	9%	(R3 x 3%)	
	Success	20%	(max)	

Time: 1 min Range: 1,000 km & 10,000 min
Max ITR: 70% (R3) Tapping? Not Usually
Base Cost: 7 MPs Task Cost: Varies Total Cost: 7+MPs
Total Prob: 96%, adj down to R3 Max PoSS = 85%

Descrip: Sing hymn to Mrs. Olsen (the nosiest of the Secret Beans). Call on her by her *secret name* and invoke her power into the crystal (blessed in her temple in the Andes). Clear mind and gaze into crystal.
History: irrelevant, since spell has been done scores of times in increasingly simple form.

Meanwhile, ESPRESSO decides to help out by using his Clairgustance as a Raw Talent (he doesn't do a spell because he doesn't have 100 minutes to spare, nor much in the way of equipment. Besides, CAPPUCINA would probably notice.) He has a 25% chance of getting his Clairgustance to work, *and it does*! Using up 4 MPs.

ESPRESSO screams in agony and disgust and falls to the ground retching. This *interrupts* CAPPUCINA, but does not cause a backlash. All she has been able to pick up before the interruption is an image of the Sacred Melita glowing against an evil brown cloud and several vague anticaffeine thoughts.

After ESPRESSO is calmed down, he states that he had been overwhelmed with the taste of truly awful coffee that had blasphemously lacked the vital spark of the Elixer. From this, CAPPUCINA deduces that the temple has somehow been desecrated by the dreaded *Sect of Sanka*! Now they definitely must enter the temple and rescue the Sacred Melita.

No longer carefree, the party opens the main gate and walks through the wall to what should have been a set of broad steps leading down in the fifteen wide Outer Court. The steps leading upwards again on the other side to the Temple Buildings are as invisible as those at their feet. A strange looking substance fills the entire 6-foot deep Outer Courtyard as far as they can see. NANA pokes it with her foot, getting immediately yelled at by the High Priestess and the guards for her stupidity, and bringing her shoe back covered with a gooey stinking substance. CAPPUCINA takes one whiff and states calmly "Curdled Ovaltine, at least two hundred years old." The others gasp in horror, since the unholy stuff has been outlawed among civilized peoples for centuries.

CAPPUCINA thinks for a moment, then orders SCARFACE back to the horses to fetch some of their rope. Pulling a ball of thin but strong twine from her pack, she hands it to NANA to hold. One end she loosens and gives to MOKO. "See that pillar over there holding up the left side of the roof over the steps?" she asks, "send this end over to it, around the corner joint and back here again."

MOKO uses his Levitation as a Raw Talent, giving him a 30% chance and costing 8 MPs. *He fails*. CAPPUCINA taps her toe and MOKO hastily tries again. This time he *succeeds*. Just as the end of the twine returns, SCARFACE arrives with several lengths of rope. One end is tied to the twine, pulled across, and secured around the back again. Soon the guards have constructed a simple rope bridge and the party is able to cross the Outer Courtyard.

Onthe other side, CAPPUCINA digs out her crystal and repeats the SPELL OF THE CLAIRVOYANT COFFEE CRYSTAL. It *works*, but she perceives nothing dangerous on the other side of the unlocked door (but then she only has a Max ITR of 70%). The party enters cautiously and finds a standard Purification Room, clean and apparently in working order. With a sigh of relief, the High Priestess decides to take a ritual bath. MOKO suggests that he and ESPRESSO do some divination first and she agrees. MOKO uses his Clairaudience as a Raw Talent, at 35% and 4 MPs. ESPRESSO uses his Clair gustance (RT) at 25 % and 4 MPs. Both efforts are successful and neither detects any trouble.

CAPPUCINA disrobes and settles down into the large tub of hot water NANA has run for her. ESPRESSO smiles and says loudly, "Thank the Bean at least this room is safe." Before he has finished speaking, holes open in the bottom of the tub and tentacles grab CAPPUCINA. The hot water turns on full blast and a panel in the roof slides open. Tiny teabags of "Mo's 666 Herbal Blend" begin to drop into the steaming water below. The herbal tea being steeped in the scalding water is Damping CAPPUCINA's psi powers while the burning heat is distracting her too much to allow her to cast any spells or even to focus on using an RT. She starts screaming in pain.

SCARFACE and ANNIE rush to the tub and begin hacking at the tentacles. ESPRESSO uses 18 MPs of Heat Control (RT) at a 15% chance, in an attempt to lower the temperature of the tub's water (a complete waste of energy, considering the mass of water involved). He *fails*. MOKO uses his Levitation (RT) at 30% and MPs to try and lift CAPPUCINO out of the tub the instant the tentacles release her. As an RT, NANA uses her Amplifying at 45% and 35 MPs. Both efforts *work*! 20 of NANA's MPs boost MOKO's 20 to 200. Her other 15 MPs are lost.

SCARFACE slips and falls into tub, dislocating his shoulder. ESPRESSO tries using his Telepathic Sending (RT) at 30% and 18 MPs, to send his memories of the taste of Real Coffee to the monster in the tub. The effort *works*. Only 15% of the message gets through, but this is enough to terrify the beast.

As the tentacles release her, CAPPUCINA is Levitated out of the tub and halfway across the room, landing violently on the floor. She only weighs 55 kilograms, and 200 MPs was far too

much. ANNIE yanks a bellowing SCARFACE out of the hot water and drags him even further from the tub than the rest of the party is.

There are now some healings to do. The High Priestess has received 202 damage to her body and the guard 10%. Unfortunately, CAPPUCINA is the only real healer in the group and she's in no shape to do any sort of magic.

NANA first tries her Mesmerism (RT) at 45% and 35 MPs, in order to command CAPPUCINA to feel no pain (full command would take 7+31=38 MPs, but 35 would block most of the pain). Unfortunately she *fails*.

Mildly chagrined, NANA rummages through CAPPUCINA's herb pack until she finds a pain-killing potion. This she helps the High Priestess to drink, urging her to take enough to knock herself out. CAPPUCINA tries to think for several seconds, nods, then does as the Journeywoman Shaman suggested.

NANA then takes ten minutes to do her well-practiced SPELL TO EXTERIORIZE TIBETAN at 75% and 5 MPs. The spell

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Spell to Exteriorize Tibetan
(to be used by Journeywoman Nana)

Props: Eviction notice from Lhasa Hilton (written in Tibetan)

Talents:	Astral Projection*	25%p.i.	5 MPs	(base)
Laws:	Sim (notice)	3%		
	Know (song)	5%		
	Words (song)	5%		
	Invoc (bear)	15%	(Piety=17)	
Bonus:	Specialty	6%	(R2 x 3%)	
	Success	20%	(max)	

Time: 10 min Range: 100 km & 1,000 min
Max ITR: Not App Tapping? Not usually
Base Cost: 5 MPs Task Cost: 0 MPs Total Cost: 5 MPs
Total Prob: 79%, adj down to R2 MaxPoSS = 75%

Descrip: Sit in lotus position and chant OM a few times. Pull out eviction notice and read in shock and horror. Deciding that leaving is mandatory, begin singing "song of power" from shamanistic Cult of the Himalayan Bear: "The Bear went over the Bardo, the Bear went over the Bardo," etc. Trance out and invoke Bear, focussing mind on leaving body. Repeat as necessary.

History: irrelevant

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works and she Astral Projects out of her body and over to CAPPUCINA. She then pulls the willing High Priestess out of her body onto the astral plane and helps her calm down.

Now on the astral, CAPPUCINA finds it easy to cast her one-minute SPELL OF FEELING FULL OF BEANS healing spell

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Spell of Feeling Full of Beans
(to be used by Mistress Cappucina)

Props: Beanbag full of blessed coffee beans
Sacred icon of Don Juan Valdez (Secret Bean of strength, vigor & help in time of need)

Talents:	Clairvoyance	14%p.i.	4 MPs	(base)
	CPK	12%	7 MPs	(base)
Laws:	Cont (laying hands)	10%		
	Sim (beanbag)	3%		
	Invoc (D.J.V.)	10%	(Piety=15)	
	Names (D.J.V.)	5%	(public name)	
	Know (anatomy)	5%		
Bonus:	Specialty	9%	(R3 x 3%)	
	Success	20%		

Time: 1 min Range: 1,000 m & 100 min
Max ITR: Not App Tapping? Not usually
Base Cost: 11 MPs Task Cost: 1 MP per 1% healed (human)
Total Cost: 11-111 MPs
Total Prob: 88%, adj down to R3 MaxPoSS = 85%

Descrip: Holding beanbag in one hand and icon in other, invoke D.J.V. by his public name. Focus attention on part of body to be healed, using clairvoyance to visualize extent and location of damage. Visualize entire body filled with coffee beans and glowing with brown light. Lay hands on patient and will healing CPK energy into body. Continue until healing achieved.

History: irrelevant

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upon her own inert body. This is at 85 % and takes 7+20=27 MPs to heal the 20% damage. The spell *works*.

After resting a while, she *repeats* the same spell on SCARFACE at 85% and 17 MPs. It *works* this time too. NANA helps her return to her body, goes back to her own, weakly tells ANNIE to stand guard and falls asleep. Everyone rests while ANNIE guards them, for about six hours.

* * *

At this point, the mages have used up these MPs apiece: CAPPUCINA, 58; NANA, 75; MOKO, 40; ESPRESSO, 44. After a six-hour rest, each regains one quarter of their Max DMPU. Their total usable MPs are now: CAPPUCINA, 505; NANA, 262; MOKO, 330; ESPRESSO, 168. Thus they are all at or very near full strength again.

* * *

After arising, CAPPUCINA tries out her CLAIRVOYANT CRYSTAL SPELL again, at 85 % and 7 MPs. The spell *works*, but all she "sees" is the Inner Courtyard she was aiming at, with its floor covered with empty nests and mounds of guano. This, however, is enough to make her suspicious. . . .

So before they go through the door, she takes a minute to do her INVERTO VERITAS SPELL, using up 40 MPs at 85%, in

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Spell of Inverto Veritas
(to be used by Mistress Cappucina)

Props: Prof journal soc sciences
Blessed inside-out (popped) coffee bean
Old sock

Talents:	Negapsi*			
26%p.i.	4 MPs	(base)		
Laws:	Sim (journal)	10%		
	Sim (bean)	8%		
	Sim (backwards)	8%		
	Cont (bean)	10%	(powerful)	
	Cont (journal)	5%		
Bonus:	Success	20%	(max)	

Time: 1 min Range: 1,000 m & 100 min
Max ITR: Not app Tapping? Not usually
Base Cost: 4 MPs Task Cost: Varies Total Cost: 4+MPs
Total prob: 92%, adj down to R3 Max PoSS = 85%

Descrip: Read from journal till stomach begins turning. Meidate upon blessed bean. Turn sock inside-out. Repeat all (actions, order and words) backwards. Do forwards again. Continue alternating until stomach is flip-flopping; finish with backwards

version. During entire process, visualize protective shell which will reverse meaning of all incoming energies. Spell can be done without props present, but contagion bonuses are then lost (making PoSS = 77%).

History: irrelevant

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order to set up a Negapsi shield around the group. This *done*, she orders them to light the previously unused torches and to be prepared to use them as weapons.

They go through the unlocked door into the Inner Courtyard. This is open to the sky and has the Sanctuary building in its center. They can see into the Sanctuary because its roof is held up by pillars instead of walls, just like their own back home. But before they can go more than a few feet forward, they are attacked by the dreaded *Nesteas*! There are 30 of them, each of which can drain one MP and do one point of physical damage as well. They appear as fetid little bats, straffing them with lemon-smelling droppings.

All except CAPPUCINA wave the torches at the Nesteas. This seems to enrage them, and they start to dive directly at the party. But as they hit the Negapsi shield, their psychic drains are reversed and they, themselves, are drained! This gives CAPPUCINA back 30 of the MPs she spent setting up the shield! With plaintive wails and whiffs of lemon, the defeated Nesteas fly away. Since most of the shield has been used up, the High Priestess lets the rest drop as well.

The Javacrucians stride carefully across the Inner Courtyard and into the Sanctuary, which appears to be empty. They are gazing sorrowfully at the tattered and besmeared Javacrucian banners, when out from behind the altar walk six Zombie Sanka Monks. The first five are wielding maces and using health food books as shields, they are tough though not terrific fighters (about "7th Level"). The sixth is carrying a tray with a steaming pot of hot Sanka and several filthy mugs. It is obvious that the Zombies are going to try and force the Javacrucians to drink the unholy Sankament.

Four of the armed Sanka Monks attack ANNIE and SCARFACE, while the fifth attacks MOKO, who is forced to fight physically, since his panic stricken attempt to use Levitation* (RT) at 30% and 20 MPs *fails* miserably. ESPRESSO rushes towards the sixth Zombie Sanka Monk, then dodges away, attempting to distract him away from the High Priestess and the Shaman.

"No time for a spell," CAPPUCINA whispers to NANA as she sees two of the Monks breaking away from the guards and heading towards them, "Amp me fast!" CAPPUCINA throws 50 MPs into an RT try at CPK disruption with a 35 % chance. NANA uses up 35 MPs at 45%, trying to Amplify her CPK. CAPPUCINA's try *works*! NANA's *fails*. So 50 MPs of CPK disruption are sent at the two attacking Monks. The 25 points of damage apiece just slows them down a bit.

Meanwhile, ESPRESSO has been cornered by the sixth Zombie Sanka Monk, who is a mage of the Third Rank. The Monk holds the boy down and starts to pour Sanka down his throat. As the panic stricken Apprentice tastes the first drops of the foul liquid, he tries desperately to use his RSPK to strike back as an RT, at 50% odds. It *works*! and 40% of his remaining MPs (.4x168=67) goes into a psychic storm around the Monk. The mugs fly in all directions and the Sanka pot explodes in his face, blowing his head half off and delivering a critical hit. The

other Zombie Sanka Monks collapse to the floor.

ESPRESSO is out cold for several minutes. As he starts to come to, he notices that he seems to be pillowed in ANNIE's lap. He decides to take his time recovering. Eventually CAPPUCINA notices that he's faking and yanks him to his feet. Everybody decides to eat and rest a while before going behind the altar and down into the Holy of Holies. Somehow ESPRESSO's head winds up in ANNIE's lap again and he snoozes happily for half an hour or so.

He wakes up to the sounds of MOKO trying his EAR, EAR THEN SPELL using Clairaudience and Retrocognition at 75% and 11 MPs. MOKO *fails* utterly. Another ten minutes go by as the Journeyman Priest tries again, this time with Damping added (another 5 MPs) and yet 4 MPs more to try to get through any shielding below. But though he has used his Max MPRpS of 20, and the spell seems to *succeed*, all he hears are some ominous burblings.

Ear, Ear Then Spell
(to be used by Journeyman Moko)

Props:	Ear Trumpet			
	Candle			
	Sundial			
	Library card for Akasic Public Library			
Talents:	Clairaudience	10%p.i.	4 MPs	(base)
	Retrocognition	10%	7 MPs	(base)
Laws:	Sim (trumpet)	3%		
	Sim (shadow)	5%		
	Know (card catalog)	5%		
	Cont (near target)	10%	(Piety=14)	
Bonus:	Specialty	6%	(R2 x 3%)	
	Success	20%	(max)	

Time: 10 min Range: 100 km & 1,000 min
Max ITR: 60%/45% CA/RC Tapping? Not usually
Base Cost: 11 MPs Task Cost: Varies with shielding
Total Cost: 11+ MPs
Total Prob: 74%

Descrip: Light candle and set up sundial. Hold trumpet to ear, thus suggesting clear hearing. Pass candle light *backwards* (W to E) past sundial, making "time" flow backwards. Take out card and invoke Librarian by public name. Touch door or wall of target room with card if possible (closeness determines contagion value). Mentally go through card catalog of History Section of A.P.L., listening for desired data till end of spell.

History: Just recently attained 20th successful use of spell in field, thus allowing both condensing and maximum Success Bonus.

CAPPUCINA tries her CRYSTAL SPELL with 50 MPs behind it at 85%. She gets through the shielding, the spell *works*, and she sees the Sacred Melita, brown clouds of dirty smoke and a pair of evilly gleaming eyes. A slim second later the vision abruptly ends.

After comparing notes, CAPPUCINA and MOKO lead the others in a Javacrucian prayer to the Secret Beans. Together the group manages to raise 75 MPs. CAPPUCINA uses these in a tapping attempt. Because she's Rank 3 and has a high Piety, she gets a 35% chance of success, which come through. She gets enough MPs to return her to full power and no other effects are noticed at the time.

The other continue to pray fervently as they go slowly down the stairs behind the altar, entering the Holy of Holies. It is like their familiar one back home, except that the cast iron stove by the central shrine is covered with filth, the mineral encrusted kettle is bubbling obscenely over the back burner, and standing on the central shrine is a gigantic six foot high and two feet diameter bottle of the diabolic decaffeinated dreck itself. Back in one corner they see the Sacred Melita glowing fitfully upon a small shelf. It appears weak but unharmed. The floor is covered with dirt and debris, all of the formerly gleaming surfaces smeared beyond recognition. It is a sight to break a Javacrucian's heart.

While walking down the steps, CAPPUCINA has been casting her INVERTO VERITAS SPELL again, successfully at the 85% odds, using 50 MPs this time. Down below, she orders the still weak ESPRESSO to stay behind the others, and the group moves slowly into the room.

A laughing figure steps out of the filthy shadows, raises a hand and sends 60 MPs of a Negapsi bolt blazing straight at them. There is a mild explosion as the two Negapsi fields cancle each other out, knocking both CAPPUCINA and the attacker down, while the remaining 10 MPs of Negapsi bolt do nothing (since there's no psi in operation at that exact moment). ESPRESSO starts praying even more fervently to the Secret Beans.

CAPPUCINA whispers "Amp me" as she scrambles up to throw an RT bolt of Retuning Psi with 50 MPs behind it. The attempt will be to Retune whatever he sends into a blessing of some sort. NANA tries her Amplifying at 45% and 35 MPs. The Shaman's try *works*. The High Priestess' *doesn't*. 350+15=365 MPs are wasted.

The ancient looking attacker laughs again, waves his hand for six seconds and aims it at the Javacrucians. CAPPUCINA realizes that they are fighting a Rank 4 Magus, and that the Evil High Priest of Sanka can easily out-magic the entire party. He looks to be several centuries old and probably knows dozens of spells she's never even heard of!

But while the hand waving has been going on, MOKO has been getting ready to unleash 20 MPs or RT Levitation* (enough to lift 6 kilograms over a meter high) at 30%. He's lucky, and it *works*, yanking the Evil High Priest's hand up (MOKO's target) just as a bolt of 150 MPs of lightning is fired from it. The lightning misses the group, hits the ceiling and knocks several small chunks from it. Unfortunately, one of the chunks hits MOKO in the head and knocks him out.

A moment later the Evil High Priest of Sanka screams in pain and fury, having just noticed that his wrist has been dislocated by the force of the yank.

Unnoticed by anyone else, ESPRESSO's eyes have begun to glow oddly—he is being possessed!

Despite his pain, the attacker throws another six second spell at the party: 60 MPs of a Mesmeric sleep command. CAPPUCINA throws up an RT Negapsi shield of 50 MPs at 50% odds, and *fails*. NANA tries an RT Reddopsi shield of 35 MPs at 35%, and she also *fails*. The entire party starts to fall asleep. . . .

Except for ESPRESSO—who has run straight up to the central shrine, screaming in Peruvian. He is possessed by the spirit of St. Juan Valdez, one of the most powerful of the Secret Beans! He lifts the giant bottle of Sanka as if it were a sack of coffee beans, turns, shouts "Ahita a lota!!" and smashes it to the floor.

The Evil High Priest of the Sanka Sect screams in utter agony "Buh, buh, that's all folks!" ages seven hundred years in an instant, and dissolves into a smoking pile of fetid creamora.

ESPRESSO looks at the others, says calmly "Adios! Via con cafe!" can collapses into unconsciousness.

When he awakens, ESPRESSO is being cuddled by both ANNIE and NANA. This he enjoys tremendously, while he watches the others prepare the sanctuary. Then with as much ceremony as can be managed, CAPPUCINA brings out the Sacred Melita and all kneel to adore it. Carefully the Javacrucian High Priestess prepared six small cups of the Elixer of Awareness, formally presenting ESPRESSO with the first one, and then passing the other around. With a heartfelt salute to the

rising sun in the West, the Javacrucians chant their sacred mantra: "God, we needed that!" and another immortal Javacrucian legend has been born.

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